Shifting Foundations:

Understanding the relationship between John Cassian and Evagrius Ponticus

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In memory of Father Bernard Green, O.S.B.

Thesis Abstract

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John Cassian is an Eastern-educated monk writing in the early fifth century for the monks of Gaul and is crucial to the development of Western monasticism through the transmission of Greek ascetic ideas to the Latin West. He is heavily influenced by the teachings of Evagrius Ponticus, a prolific late fourth-century Egyptian monk crucial to the development of Christian mysticism; however, there has been no clear line drawn between the influence of Evagrius and Cassian's own originality. While Cassian uses Evagrian asceticism to the fullest, he nevertheless places it onto a divergent theological foundation which fundamentally alters that inherited asceticism. Evagrius' asceticism is shaped by his anthropology, cosmology, soteriology, and eschatology – all of which are based on his understanding of Creation and Christology. The monk working through Evagrius' asceticism sees the world and all the divisions in it—e.g. body/soul, human/angel/demon, vice/virtue—as a temporary construct which facilitates the eventual obliteration of all divisions through salvation – including divisions between good and evil. Cassian, however, writes twenty years after Evagrius' death and in a changed theological atmosphere, in which Evagrius' basic premises have become more controversial. Cassian is able to work an ascetic program previously defined by Evagrian theology into a legitimate and coherent asceticism based on a different understanding of Creation. This resembles Evagrius' asceticism to such an extent, that he has been called "merely a Latin translator". However, through fleshing out and comparing Cassian's understanding of the practical, the eight principal vices, the spiritual battle, and the contemplative life, it becomes clear that Cassian has a fundamentally different understanding of Creation and Christology, and this changes the relationship between body and soul, created and Creator, and corruption and salvation – all fundamental areas in an effective and coherent asceticism. Therefore, although the frame of his asceticism is Evagrian, the theological underpinnings of that asceticism create a vastly different experience for the monk through a different definition of humanity and the relationship between created and Creator.

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John Cassian is an Eastern-educated monk writing in the early fifth century for the monks of Gaul and is crucial to the development of Western monasticism through the transmission of Greek ascetic ideas to the Latin West. He bridged the growing gap between East and West in order to provide the monks of Gaul with what he considered to be the correct form of monasticism – that of the monks in Egypt. Beginning with Salvatore Marsili's work in 1936, Cassian has always been found to have a large debt to the Greek theologian, Evagrius Ponticus, in his writings and it has become impossible to talk of Cassian's theology without mentioning the profound influence of Evagrius;[1] however, scholars have recently started to investigate where Evagrius' influence stops and Cassian's own development of ideas begins. Although it is important to understand that Marsili's detailed work "established that the framework, and no less the *scopos*, of Cassian's explanation of monastic life can be positively correlated to the scheme of contemplation fashioned by Evagrius Ponticus,"[2] it is just as important to recognize the many other significant similarities, differences, and developments. Recent Cassian scholarship has been working to rehabilitate him from being written off as "merely a Latin translator of Evagrius Ponticus' elaborate theories."[3] Although it is clear that Evagrius had a large impact on Cassian's fulfillment of bringing the correct kind of monasticism to Gaul, Augustine Casiday points out that sometimes it is too easy for scholarship to let Cassian become "overshadowed by Evagrius' supposed influence."[4]

As the scholarly conversation concerning the Evagrian influence within Cassian's works is changing to recognize his own ingenuity, it is no longer acceptable for Marsili's work to be the stock reference for it. Therefore, it is necessary to re-evaluate Cassian's relationship to Evagrian asceticism in order to qualify how modern scholars refer to this relationship. An important factor to take into account is the intervening years between Evagrius' death in Egypt and Cassian's publications in Marseilles. The theological atmosphere of the late 390s is vastly different than that of the 420s. Cassian leaves Egypt with the Tall Brothers during the anthropomorphite controversy and ends up in Constantinople under the guidance of John Chrysostom. Chrysostom has a big impact on Cassian, even ordaining him, and Cassian travels to Rome on his behalf when he himself comes under controversy. During this time the Pelagian debate also arises, drawing in such important figures as Augustine and Jerome. In fact, Jerome even connects the Origenists to

[1] D. Salvatore Marsili OSB, *Giovanni Cassiano ed Evagrio Pontico: Dottrina sulla Carità e Contemplazione*, Studia Anselmiania 5, Roma: Herder, 1936.
[2] A.M.C. Casiday, *Tradition and Theology in St John Cassian,* Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007, p.64.
[3] Pierre Courcelle states this as his understanding of Marsili's work and says that it is "highly convincing," cf. Pierre Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers and their Greek Sources,* Harry E. Wedeck (trans.), Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1969, from *Les letters grecques en Occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore*, 2nd ed, Paris: Boccard, 1948.
[4] Casiday, *Tradition and Theology*, p.5.

the Pelagians in one of his letters, and, in another, disparages Evagrius' use of *apatheia* in his monastic theology.[5] In addition, the focus in the Trinitarian debate concerning the status of the three persons of the Trinity is drawing to a close and shifting to a focus on the full humanity and full divinity of Christ. Each of these changing aspects of Cassian's contemporary theological atmosphere affects his reception of Evagrian asceticism. Crucially, it affects his theology and causes him to shift his understanding of Creation and Christology in such a vital way that the definition of humanity changes as well as the relationship between created and Creator.

Therefore, this thesis will explore the ramifications of this changed foundational theology on the "Evagrian" asceticism of John Cassian. First, it will look specifically at the practical life. The first four books of the *Institutes* provide a set of rules and regulations concerning the functioning of the cenobium. In Book One, Cassian sets out the pieces of the monastic habit as well as the spiritual meanings for each. While this is influenced by the same scheme found in Evagrius' *Praktikos*, his spiritual meanings for each piece of clothing are different. They are shaped by his own ascetical focus and audience. Because this is a topic in which many scholars have blankly stated is affected by Evagrius, it is necessary to give a detailed analysis of what exactly is influenced by Evagrius and what is not. From here, the chapter turns to areas of the practical ascetical life that receive much more detail and focus in Cassian than in Evagrius: psalmody, entering the cenobium, and the Abba-monk relationship. These areas are presented in the chapter in the order Cassian himself presents them. Here it is possible to see the foundations that the practical life provides for the contemplative life – foundations that Cassian regarded as crucial to the development of the ascetic toward salvation. Finally, the chapter ends on the consideration of the three renunciations that clearly have their inspiration in Evagrius. The third renunciation, however, shifts based on Cassian's changed theology showing the importance of the theological underpinnings of his asceticism.

The second chapter is a detailed analysis of the eight principal vices. Evagrius is the first to set these out as principal vices, but Cassian is the one who gives them a consistent and definitive structure. He provides scriptural evidence for the number of eight vices, and he develops intricate relationships between them separate from what is found in Evagrius. His understanding of gluttony is defined by his understanding of humanity and the presence of the body in the Fall. Gluttony is the definitive vice of humanity, and fornication is the vice of the current state of humanity. Fornication came about after the Fall and therefore is represented not only in the desires of the body, but also is a separation from God—i.e. the current state of humanity. Cassian's understanding of avarice is quite similar to Evagrius' with influences from John Chrysostom. Anger is a complex vice which Evagrius prominently links to the irascible part of the soul. Cassian, because of his experiences with the anthropomorphite controversy, finds it necessary to give an exposition on divine anger. Sadness for Cassian is linked to the punishment of Eve and therefore can have beneficial qualities when it leads to the repentance of sins. He describes it more as depression than Evagrius who links it to memory and nostalgia. Sadness is also found among the demons for Cassian. Acedia is the particular vice that plagues monks, and therefore has a very similar character in Cassian as in Evagrius, however, with more stress on practical work in the former. Cassian directly disagrees in connecting Vainglory to matter as Evagrius does (of course without mentioning his name though). Nor does he agree that it is one of three vices on the front line with gluttony and avarice. Cassian places greater importance on Pride, as it is the epitome of turning away from God, and insists on its place in the temptations of Adam and Jesus. Finally, the chapter ends with the curious issue of envy, which Evagrius includes in one of his lists of vices, but not all. It is not part of the eight principal vices for Cassian, yet

[5] Cf. Jerome, *Letter 133.3*; *Dialogi contra Pelagianos* prol. 1

he describes it in Conference Eighteen with such force that it is not surprising that it continues to hold such a place that it is eventually included in Gregory's list of seven sins. This chapter shows that although Cassian clearly uses the frame of the eight principal vices, he develops them in a unique way.

The third chapter concerns the spiritual battle. The most important theological aspect for understanding this battle is Creation. Within each monk's understanding of Creation are the definitions for angels, demons, and humans. These definitions dictate the interactions between the three beings as well as the cosmological atmosphere of the battle. Because of Evagrius' understanding of two creations – one immaterial, and one material – he portrays a cosmological scheme that creates a different eschatological pathway than Cassian. For Evagrius, the human being lies directly between knowledge/angels/virtue and ignorance/demons/vice on his journey toward salvation. Because of this cosmology, he is able to speak interchangeably of the demons, thoughts, and passions. Cassian, on the other hand, portrays a more biblically based understanding of Creation in which the angels were created as angels before the creation of this world. The demons fell from being angels and are eternally condemned because their only sin was pride. Adam and Eve, on the other hand, fell through three vices: gluttony, vainglory/avarice, and pride. They also had the external instigation of the Devil. Cassian uses the inclusion of the Devil and gluttony to explain the human ability for salvation. It is *because* of these influences outside of pride that humans are able to be saved; however, salvation comes through the purification of both body and soul. Therefore, he places a greater influence on the inner battle, between the flesh and the spirit, than on the demonic battle, yet he provides more detail concerning the organization, personalities, and emotions of the demons. Cassian's divergent understanding of Creation vastly changes his understanding of the spiritual battle and the experience of the monk undertaking his asceticism.

The fourth chapter delves into the details of the contemplative life, through which the relationship between created and Creator can be found. Cassian's Christology is shaped by the theological atmosphere of his time – Christ is fully human, fully divine, and for Cassian there is no separation between him and the Trinity, unlike for Evagrius. Evagrius is focused on preserving the line between created and uncreated and therefore he subordinates Christ. Christ is the creator of the second material creation and the goal of second natural contemplation, but from here the monk moves past Christ as a goal and he becomes helper in the first natural contemplation of the first immaterial creation and the Trinity. This division between creations has a huge impact on Evagrius' understanding of the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, *apatheia*, and prayer. For Cassian, the connection to God happens through the heart in love. The heart is the seat of the Holy Spirit and place of cultivation of the ultimate virtue, love, which *is* God. He emphasizes the role of chastity working with purity of heart—the purification of both the outer and inner man, respectively—in the cultivation of this connection to God. Although his understanding and description of prayer is very similar to Evagrius, in one key area, he stands apart. He explains that there are four types of prayer, the fourth being the fiery, fervent prayers of thanksgiving. It is during these prayers that the human being recognises the grace and love of God, which is the epitome of letting go of the human will.

Cassian's ascetic journey is framed through the purification of body and soul for the transformation of both in salvation. His emphasis on the heart creates a connection to God that is more emotive and psychological than Evagrius' philosophical emphasis on a specific set of knowledge found by the *nous* alone. Therefore, while Cassian's asceticism has the frame of Evagrian asceticism, his foundational theology is so drastically different that the experience of the monk is radically changed.

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There are many people to whom I owe a debt of gratitude in the completion of this thesis. First of all, I want to thank my supervisor, Dr. Philip Booth, for taking on a doctoral student halfway through her doctorate. With all the ups and downs during that time period, I imagine it was not the easiest thing to take on; however, without his patient understanding and encouragement, I would not have been able to make this thesis what it is. He provided me with support, insight, and discipline when needed and I want to express my deepest thanks.

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A Note on Texts and Translations

For the texts of Cassian and Evagrius, I have endeavoured to provide my own translations of the Latin and Greek with reference and guidance from published translations. However, not all of Evagrius' texts survive fully or at all in Greek, i.e. *Gnostikos, Kephalaia Gnostica, Antirrhetikos, Letters, Letter to Melania, Commentary on Cherubim, Commentary on Seraphim,* and the *Commentary on the Our Father*. Added to this list is the *Scholia on Luke,* which has not yet been included in a modern critical edition. Therefore, for these texts I have relied on the modern translations of other authors in English, French, and German, in order to gain the best understanding of the Evagrian texts. I have also endeavoured to the use the English titles of the texts, except where it is common in modern scholarship not to, i.e. *Praktikos, Gnostikos, Kephalaia Gnostica, Antirrhetikos,* and *Skemmata.*

Introduction

John Cassian is an Eastern-educated monk writing in the early fifth century for the monks of Gaul and is crucial to the development of Western monasticism through the transmission of Greek ascetic ideas to the Latin West. Beginning with Salvatore Marsili's work, *Giovanni Cassiano ed Evagrio Pontico: Dottrina sulla Carità e Contemplazione,* published in 1936, Cassian has always been found to have a large debt to the Greek theologian, Evagrius Ponticus. It has become impossible to talk of Cassian's theology without mentioning the profound influence of Evagrius and often this connection and, especially, the implications of Marsili's work has been misconstrued;[6] however, scholars have recently started to investigate where Evagrius' influence stops and Cassian's own development of ideas begins. Although it is important to understand that Marsili's detailed work "established that the framework, and no less the *scopos*, of Cassian's explanation of monastic life can be positively correlated to the scheme of contemplation fashioned by Evagrius Ponticus,"[7] it is just as important to recognize the many other significant similarities, differences, and developments. Recent Cassian scholarship has been working to rehabilitate him from being written off as "merely a Latin translator of Evagrius Ponticus' elaborate theories."[8]Although it is clear that Evagrius had a large impact on Cassian's fulfilment of bringing the correct kind of monasticism to

[6] Cf. Dom Salvatore Marsili OSB, *Giovanni Cassiano ed Evagrio Pontico: Dottrina sulla Carità e Contemplazione*, Studia Anselmiania 5, Roma: Herder, 1936.
[7] A.M.C. Casiday, *Tradition and Theology in St John Cassian,* Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007, p.64.
[8] Pierre Courcelle states this as his understanding of Marsili's work and says that it is "highly convincing," cf. Pierre Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers and their Greek Sources,* Harry E. Wedeck (trans.), Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1969, from *Les letters grecques en Occident de Macrobe à Cassiodore,* 2nd ed, Paris: Boccard, 1948.; For a similar view, cf. Michel Olphe-Galliard, "Cassien (Jean)", *Dictionnairre de spiritualité*, 2, pp.214-76; Cristian Bădiliță has also overstretched the connection between Cassian and Evagrius by suggesting that Abba Serenus, from Conferences Seven and Eight, may actually be Evagrius; however, on closer inspection of the theology contained within these conferences, it is clear that this is impossible, see Chapter III for more on this. Also, cf. Cristian Bădiliță, "Jean Cassien et le mythe de anges déchus" in *Jean Cassien entre l'orient et l'occident*, Cristian Bădiliță and Attila Jakab, (eds.), Paris: Beauchesne, 2003, pp. 221 n.2

Gaul, Augustine Casiday points out that sometimes it is too easy for scholarship to let Cassian become "overshadowed by Evagrius' supposed influence."[9]

Owen Chadwick, in his work published in 1968, lays the foundation for recognizing Cassian's departure from Evagrius, but is not prepared to embrace his creative originality. He considered Cassian to have few "leading ideas" that were not drawn from Evagrius, but allowed that Cassian "changed the emphasis at certain points" and freed Evagrian ideas from the problematic Greek terms by working through Latin – a language "free from the faint reminiscence of Stoic or Gnostic or Platonist" ideas.[10] Chadwick does recognize the need for understanding Cassian in terms of his own environment of Latin Gaul in the 420s, something that has shaped his writings perhaps as much as his time in the Egyptian desert in the 390s. In 1998, however, Columba Stewart truly begins the rescue of Cassian's ingenuity when he states that although Cassian "relied heavily on Evagrius' writings, […] his development and departure from Evagrian thought is often as notable as his dependence on it."[11] Since Stewart's publication of *Cassian the Monk,* more scholars have taken up the standard of Cassian's originality; however, the new developments in this area of Cassian scholarship are scattered throughout the works of such scholars as Conrad Leyser, Bernard & Patricia McGinn, David Brakke, Augustine Casiday, and George Demacopolous.[12] Therefore, it is necessary to bring together and build upon their ideas, as well as to consider the developments in Evagrian scholarship with the works of Gabriel Bunge, Antoine

[9] Casiday, *Tradition and Theology,* p.5.
[10] Owen Chadwick, *John Cassian*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1968, pp.92-3.
[11] Columba Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998, p.36.
[12] Conrad Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great,* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000, & "Angels, Monks, and Demons in the Early Medieval West," in *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies presented to Henry Mayr-Harting,* Richard Gameson & Henrietta Leyser, (eds.), Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001, pp.9-22; Bernard McGinn & Patricia Ferris McGinn, *Early Christian Mystics: The Divine Vision of the Spiritual Masters*, New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2003; David Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2006; Augustine Casiday, *Tradition and Theology in St John Cassian*; and George E. Demacopolous, *Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church,* Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007.

Guillaumont, Jeremy Driscoll, Robert Sinkewicz, and Julia Konstantinovsky, as well as Casiday again.[13]

Cassian uses the Evagrian asceticism to his own aims and with the underpinnings of his own theology. There are clear influences from Evagrius in Cassian's presentation of the monastic habit, the eight principal vices, the battle between the demons and the monks, prayer, purity of heart, love, and contemplation. However, each of these Evagrian aspects are developed in a distinctly Cassianic way and through a distinct theology. The changes in the foundational theology of his asceticism cause even the most Evagrian elements to alter their character. The most significant theological difference is Cassian's understanding of Creation, which has vital effects on his anthropology, Christology, eschatology, soteriology, and cosmology. All of these areas affect the necessity of the practical acts, the spiritual battle, the eradication of the vices, and cultivating the connection to God through purity of heart, love, contemplation, and prayer. Evagrius is a figure of controversy by the time Cassian settles down in Marseilles, and is not mentioned at all in Cassian's work even though he does mention other contemporaries.[14]

This thesis will therefore argue that while Cassian uses the Evagrian frame of asceticism, it is filled out using a different foundational theology causing the experience and understanding of the monk to be vastly changed. Chapter One takes an in-depth look at each monk's presentation of the practical life in order to gain a fuller understanding of the

[13] Gabriel Bunge, "Evagre le Pontique et les Deux Macaire," *Irénikon* 56, 1983, pp.323-60; among other works of Bunge's. Antione Guillaumont, *Les "Kephalaia Gnostica" d'Évagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'Origénisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens,* Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1962. Jeremy Driscoll, *The* Ad Monachos *of Evagrius Ponticus: Its Structure and a Select Commentary*, Studia Anselmiana 104, Rome: Benedictina Edizioni Abbazia S.Paolo, 1991; and "Evagrius and Paphnutius on the causes for abandonment by God," *Studia Monastica* 39, 1997, pp.259-86; Augustine Casiday, *Evagrius Ponticus*, London: Routledge, 2006; Robert Sinkewicz, *Evagrius Ponticus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003; and Julia Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus: The Making of a Gnostic*, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2009.

[14] Cassian mentions Jerome and Basil in the preface to the *Institutes*, as well as important church officials in his four dedications at the beginning of the *Institutes*, Conf 1-10, 11-17, and 18-24. He also references Hilary, Ambrose, Jerome, Rufinus, Augustine, Gregory Nazianzen, Athanasius and John Chyrsostom in ch.24-31 of Book Seven of the *De Incarnatione Domini Contra Nestorium* in order to support his argument against the heretic.

practical foundations for the contemplative life. This chapter especially helps to show that Evagrius is not always a consistent influence in Cassian's asceticism. Chapter Two turns to his incorporation of the eight principal vices. Cassian gives the vices a definitive and consistent structure not found in Evagrius. He also develops each of the eight—gluttony, fornication, avarice, anger, sadness, acedia, vainglory, and pride—in his own way causing them to have a different role and set of implications in the ascetic life.

Chapter Three delves into each monk's presentation of the spiritual battle, which is one of the definitive experiences for the monk during this time. However, their divergent understandings of Creation create divergent definitions of angels, demons, and humans, causing the relationships between these beings to function differently as well as have different eschatological effects. Cassian's definition of humanity also causes him to place a higher emphasis on the internal struggle, between the flesh and the spirit, than on the demonic battle. This internalization of sin, especially, has effects on the development of Western Christianity. Finally, Chapter Four will compare the effects of the divergent Creations on the contemplative, by first exposing their vastly different Christologies. The chapter then turns to each monk's understanding of the kingdom of God, purity of heart/*apatheia*, love and contemplation, and prayer.

What is found in this chapter is Cassian's focus on the struggle between the flesh and the spirit because of the psychosomatic nature of the human being at the instant of Creation, causes him to necessitate the purification of both the body and soul. Purity of heart must function alongside chastity in order for the monk to cultivate love, which *is* God. Cassian places the point of connection to God in the heart, whereas Evagrius places it within the *nous* alone, which is because of his understanding of two creations. Evagrius' focus on the two creations causes two stages of contemplation. This coupled with his favouritism philosophical language to express his theology causes his focus to be on the intellectual connection to God

through a specific set of knowledge. For Cassian, however, his focus on the heart and the development of love causes him to emphasize the emotive, psychological connection to God which is expressed in the fiery, fervent prayers of thanksgiving. Therefore, it becomes clear that while Cassian uses the Evagrian framework for asceticism, his foundational theology necessitates a vastly different ascetic experience and understanding of the definition of humanity as well as the relationship between created and Creator.

Intro.1: Biographies

In order to understand fully all that affects Cassian's development of Evagrian asceticism, it is necessary to take into account each monk's biography. Evagrius dies thirty-five years before Cassian but is born only fifteen years earlier, yet he is such a prolific writer in his shorter life span that there are texts ranging from many different genres attributed to him. Cassian, on the other hand, wrote three texts that are extant and their authorship assured. Cassian also experiences an important shift in the theological conversation between the 390s and the 420s. There are significant controversies and debates that arise during this time period that have an important effect on his theology. Therefore, it is necessary now to set out each monk's biography before then turning to this changing theological atmosphere.

It is important to note here that the existence at all of a monk named John Cassian writing these Latin texts in the beginning of the fifth century has been questioned. Panayoitis Tzamalikos has suggested through two lengthy and detailed volumes on the ninth or tenth century Greek manuscript from the monastery at Meteora, MS 573, that the Latin John Cassian did not write the *Institutes* and *Conferences*, but, actually, these two works are translations and reworkings of a sixth century work by a Greek monk named Kasianos.[15]

[15] PanayiotisTzamalikos, *A newly discovered Greek Father: Cassian the Sabaite eclipsed by John Cassian of Marseilles,* Leiden: Brill, 2012; and Panayiotis Tzamalikos, *The real Cassian revisited: monastic life, Greek paideia, and Origenism in the sixth century*, Leiden: Brill, 2012

While the text in the manuscript itself is an important piece of the literary tradition and history – and Tzamalikos' edition and commentary an important addition to modern scholarship – his assertion of the complete denial of the Latin writer, John Cassian, is unfounded.

Tzamalikos suggests that the references to John Cassian as the author of the *Institutes* and *Conferences* in Gennadius, Cassiodorus, and Palladius are the result of misinterpretation and interpolation.[16] MS 573 only contains part of what we now know of as the *Institutes* and *Conferences*. It, for example, does not contain those which connect closest to Pelagius and Augustine – like Conference 13 – and therefore, Tzamalikos states that "the real Cassian had nothing to do with either Pelagius or Augustine whatsoever."[17] Based on this, his principle argument against the texts being Latin in origin is that everything not present in the Greek text must have been added by a sixth century Latin author. They are interpolations. He also makes it clear that he does not believe a Latin author would have a good enough command of Greek to be the original author. This then requires that whoever created the Latin text, quickly enough for it to effect *Regula Magistri* as well as Benedict, to have an excellent command and understanding of the theology of the early fifth century – at least 100 years prior. This is a huge leap to make.

It is clear that John Cassian is fully entrenched in the theological atmosphere of the early fifth century. Furthermore, while he may not have that much of a connection to Pelagius himself—other than both being accused of being a follower of his teachings, as well as condemning others as followers of his teachings—he most certainly has a close connection to the theology of Augustine, as has been shown by Benedict Ramsey, Augustine Casiday, and

[16] cf. Tzamalikos, *The Real Cassian Revisited*, p.20-21; also cf. Columba Stewart, "Another Cassian?", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 66, No. 2, April 2015, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.374: "Tzamalikos maintains that Prosper of Aquitaine was not responding to Cassian's *Conference* 13 in his *Contra collatorem*; Palladius did not mean *this* Cassian and Germanus in his *Dialogue*; Gennadius' entry on Cassian was interpolated."
[17] Tzamalikos, *The Real Cassian Revisited*, p.59.

as will be seen in this work as well.[18] Beyond this, Casiday and Stewart both show in their respective reviews that Tzamalikos does not adequately consider Evagrius or Origen's influence on the Latin works of John Cassian, especially in *Conference* 9-10.[19]

While Tzamalikos brings forward a needed edition of the work in MS 573, he does not adequately make his case that the phantom John Cassian took over the place of the Greek Kasianos. Not only does he imply a masterful effort on a sixth century Latin author to create the connection, downplay the Evagrian influence, and completely disregard the possibility for Greek mastery in a Latin author (yet this author would have had both an excellent command of Greek and fifth century ideas to create what we know of as John Cassian's *Institutes* and *Conferences*), but he also does not adequately explain the presence of Germanus. Rather he implies it is merely coincidence or a clever trick by the Latin translator of the Greek text to create the connection to the Cassian and Germanus mentioned by Palladius. If Tzamalikos is to be believed, this sixth century Latin author is surely something to behold and may be the best writer, artist, and master of deception who ever lived. However, the rest of this particular work will also stand as argument for John Cassian, against Tzamalikos' assertions of Kasianos, as it places Cassian firmly within the theological and monastic milieu of the early fifth century.

Intro.1.1: John Cassian (c.360-c.435)

It is difficult to write a precise biography for Cassian because he focuses on his primary task of presenting a kind of handbook for the monks of Gaul of monastic rules and theology, revealing only brief glimpses into his personal life. However, many scholars have attempted

[18] For Cassian as being accused of Pelagianism, cf. Prosper of Aquitaine, *Contra collatorem*. For Cassian's accusation of others as Pelagian, cf. Cassian, *De Incarnatione* 1.3-4. For Cassian and Augustine, cf. Boniface Ramsey, "John Cassian: a student of Augustine", *Cistercian Studies Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 1, 1993, pp.5-15; Augustine Casiday, *Tradition and Theology in St. John Cassian*; and Columba Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*.
[19] cf. Stewart, "Another Cassian?", p.376; Casiday, Augustine Casiday, "Review of P. Tzamalikos, A Newly Discovered Greek Father: Cassian the Sabaite; and Tzamalikos, The Real Cassian Revealed", *Journal of Medieval Monastic Studies* 3, Brepols Publishers, 2014, p. 123-4.

to trace his life from the information we do have remaining to us.[20] It is believed that he was born around 360 in Scythia.[21] He then went to Bethlehem for his education and there he met his companion Germanus. Cassian and Germanus left Bethlehem in order to travel through the communities of monks in Egypt to learn about their way of life and to gain as much as possible from their wisdom.[22] It is unclear exactly how long the two companions stayed in Egypt, but they seem to have left during the tumultuous years of 399-400 with the rising tide of the Origenist Controversy. Cassian mentions the first letter of Theophilus which he wrote against the anthropomorphic views and the effect it had on certain monks, but does not mention the second, which went against his own anti-anthropomorphic views. Therefore, while it is unclear if Cassian and Germanus left with the Tall Brothers themselves, it is probable that they left sometime around this time. They at least reach Constantinople well before 404, during which year Cassian and Germanus travel to Rome in order to bring a letter to the Pope on John Chrysostom's behalf.[23] Before journeying to Rome, it seems that they shared a close relationship to Chrysostom since Cassian is ordained a deacon by him and it seems that he and Germanus may have been put in charge of the cathedral treasury before a fire that occurred in June 404.[24]

[20] Cassian's biography is put together through pieces of information within his own works, as well as Gennadius of Marseilles' short biography of him in his *De viris inlustribus*, (cf. Gennadius, *De vir. inlus.*, Ernest Cushing Richardson (ed.), *Texte und Untersuchungen* 14, pt 1, Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1896). For a more in-depth look into the issues involved in mapping Cassian's biography, cf. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, pp.3-24. For more context concerning his life and times, cf. Richard J Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian: Aristocrats, Asceticism, and Reformation in 5th century Gaul*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007; and Philip Rousseau, *Ascetics, Authority, and the Church*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 1978.

[21] This is based on Gennadius calling him *natione Scythia*, cf. *De viris inlustribus* 14.1. His birthplace has been a topic of much debate, for an excellent treatment of this issue, cf. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.4-5.

[22] Cassian makes their place of origin clear in Conference Seventeen, where he a Germanus question the necessity of keeping their promise to return quickly

[23] Palladius'*Dialogue on the Life of John Chrysostom* and a letter from Pope Innocent I name both Germanus and Cassian. cf. Pope Innocent I, *Epistolae, Patrologia Latina* 20, 463-608.

[24] For Cassian being ordained by Chrysostom, cf. Gennadius, *De viris inlustribus* 62. Cassian himself admits to being ordained a deacon by "a bishop's hands" in *Inst.* 11.18, and that it was Chrysostom who brought him into the "sacred ministry" in *De Inc.* 7.31.1, for more on this, cf. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.13. Also, that Cassian and Germanus might have been in charge of the treasury is evidenced by their providing the receipt for all the items in the cathedral treasury after the fire in June 404, cf. Palladius, *Dialogue* 3

After "these first historical references to Cassian," the path of his life again becomes uncertain until 419, twenty years after he left Egypt, when he published the first of his works, the *De institutis coenobiorum et de octo principalium vitiorum remediis,* or the *Institutes*.[25] This work is comprised of twelve books – four are dedicated to the rules of the coenobium and eight to each of the principal vices. He then builds upon the ideals presented in the *Institutes* in his larger work, *Collationes Patrum* or the *Conferences*. This text is comprised of twenty-four books of discussions that Cassian and Germanus had with the Egyptian Fathers which pertain to the inner life of the ascetic. It was written in three stages, with Conferences 1-10 being published in the early 420s, followed by Conferences 11-17 and then 18-24. Through these two main works, the *Institutes* and the *Conferences*, Cassian earned a certain amount of authority which is shown in his being asked by the Archdeacon of Rome, Leo (who later became Pope), to write a treatise against the teachings of Nestorius. Cassian published the *De Incarnatione Domini Contra Nestorium* in 429 or 430.[26] After this treatise, there is no more from Cassian himself; however, he does end up in controversy with the publishing of Prosper's *Against the Conferencer* in 432, in which Prosper condemns what he considers to be Cassian's anti-Augustinian views on Grace and Free Will presented in Conference Thirteen.[27] It is thought that Cassian probably died a few years later, but again it is very uncertain. Whatever the details of Cassian's personal life, his works clearly had an important role in the development of Western monasticism. He influenced such important figures as Pope Leo the Great, St Benedict, and Gregory the Great, and also seems to have enjoyed a certain prominence in Irish monasticism.[28]

[25] Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, 13.
[26] This date is based especially on the fact that Cassian calls Nestorius a bishop – a title he lost in Pope Celestine's Roman Synod in August 430 – indicating he still was in power; cf. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, 22; and Casiday, *Tradition and Theology*, p.229.
[27] This caused him to later be termed as a "Semi-Pelagian" – a term which Casiday has argued convincingly is misleading and incorrect, cf. Casiday, *Tradition and Theology*.
[28] cf. Chadwick, *John Cassian*, pp.148-162; and Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, pp.24-5.

Intro.1.2: Evagrius Ponticus (c.345-399/400)

We have a much clearer picture of the life of Evagrius than that of Cassian, and although Cassian's biographical details are murky, it is possible that Evagrius and Cassian crossed paths at some point in Kellia. Evagrius himself was born *c*.345 in Pontus, and at an early age came under the tutelage of St Basil. After he was ordained a lector by the Cappadocian, he left for Constantinople where he fell to temptation. After receiving a dream from an angel, he left the city for Jerusalem, where, in 382, he met Melania the Elder, the leader of a monastic community.[29] While in Jerusalem, Evagrius again received a divine sign that he was not on the correct path – he came down with a fever incurable by doctors. Therefore, Melania realized that it was a spiritual sickness that was ailing him and she urged him to take up the life of the monk and embrace the desert.[30] In 383, Evagrius traveled to Lower Egypt and eventually settled in Kellia in 385, and was there until his death in 399/400.[31] During his time in Egypt, Evagrius wrote a number of monastic, theological, and exegetical works. Works like *The Foundations of the Monastic Life: A Presentation on the Practice of Stillness* and *To Eulogios: On the Confession of Thoughts and Counsel in their Regard* were intended to help the monk with the rules and practice of the ascetic life. *Praktikos*, *Peri Logismōn* (*On Thoughts*), and *Antirrhetikos* are essential for the ascetic life and have considerable focus on the monk's relationship to the eight principal vices/thoughts/demons. The *Praktikos* is thought to form a kind of trilogy with the *Gnostikos* and the *Kephalaia Gnostica*, which represent his more theological ideas, as a compendium for the monk in the stages of the ascetic life: *praktike, physike,* and *theologike*. Other important texts are *On Prayer,* his letters—especially the *Letter to Melania* and the letter *On the Faith*—and his exegetical

[29] Cf. Palladius, *Historica Lausiaca* 38.3-9; Sinkewicz, *EP: The Greek Ascetic Corpus*, p.xvii.; Konstantinovsky, *EP: The Making of a Gnostic*, p.16.; Brakke, *Demons*, p.50
[30] Cf. Palladius, *Historica Lausiaca* 38.9; Casiday, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.9; Sinkewicz, *EP: The Greek Ascetic Corpus*, xvii; and Brakke, *Demons*, p.50
[31] Cf. Palladius, *Historica Lausiaca* 38.11; Antoine Guillaumont, *Un Philosophie au Désert: Évagre le Pontique*, Paris: Vrin, 2004, p.63 n.6; and Casiday, *Evagrius Ponticus*, pp.11-13

works on Luke, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job, and the *Our Father*.[32] Although Evagrius' works (along with his predecessor, Origen) are later condemned by the Fifth Ecumenical Council in 553, his ascetic formulae on the practical and contemplative life, the vices, the spiritual battle, and prayer have a great impact on Cassian.[33]

While Evagrius is not officially condemned until 553, Evagrius is a figure of controversy within Cassian's lifetime through, especially, Jerome's vitriolic attacks on the Evagrian doctrine of *apatheia* and is connection of Evagrius to the leading Origenists, which he also connects to the heretical Pelagians.[34] He would have been in Egypt when Cassian was traveling with Germanus. The pair certainly had the opportunity to come across Evagrius in Kellia and listen to the wisdom of his teachings, but it is hard to ascertain if Cassian ever actually met Evagrius. However, it is also difficult to pin down the textual relationship between the Evagrian works and those of Cassian giving the strong suggestion that much of it is learned through an oral tradition. Whatever actual contact he had with Evagrius himself, his writings, or his teachings while he was in Egypt, Cassian is able to combine the ascetical framework of Evagrius' ideas with the theological conversation emerging in the Latin West in a unique and profound way.

Intro.2: Differing cultural and theological atmospheres

Considering the biographies of Cassian and Evagrius, it becomes clear that one of the most important things to take into account concerning Cassian's relationship to Evagrius' work is the intervening years between 399/400 – when Evagrius dies and Cassian leaves Egypt – and 419 when Cassian only begins publishing his works. The atmosphere of the East in the 390s

[32] For a complete list of Evagrius' works and the languages they appear in (both ancient and modern), cf. "Literary Corpus of Evagrius Ponticus", *Evagrius Ponticus: Monastic Theologian*, Joel Kalvesmaki, (ed.), Dec. 2009, Web, 04 May 2011, <http://www.kalvesmaki.com/evagpont/corpus.htm>.
[33] Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys*, 2nd ed, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007, p.97.
[34] Cf. Jerome, *Epistula 133*.3; *Dialogi contra Pelagianos*, prol. 1; *In Hieremiam Prophetam libri vi*, lib. 4

is different from that of the West in the 420s. The controversies and debates going on in the Greek East in the 390s would have affected both Evagrius and Cassian, but Cassian was also affected by those that went on after – the Anthropomorphite controversy, Chrysostom's condemnation, the Pelagian controversy, and, later, the Nestorian controversy.

Intro.2.1: Origenism

As shall be seen, labels of heretical ideas are difficult to define in modern scholarship as they often had many different uses in their contemporary texts. They could be a legitimate term referring to the source of an idea, which may have been taken on by others, or they could also be loaded terms used in order to discredit one's opponent. In the controversy with anthropomorphism and the interpretation of the image of God, Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, is both an Origenist in one way, and an anti-Origenist in another. Jerome, who condemns Pelagianism through connecting it to Evagrian, and thus Origenist, ideas, both translates some of Origen's works and condemns Rufinus for doing so with other works of Origen. Traces of the ideas of the prolific third century theologian can be found in nearly every theologian who came after him as his works and ideas advanced the conversation of Christian belief both through agreement and disagreement with them. Therefore, "Origenism" and "Origenist" are very difficult terms to define as a modern scholar as it often depends on the particular biases of the particular Christian author one is writing about. Those who were deemed "Origenist" were considered radical in some way, but not always in one particular area of theology – yet their common ground would have been that whichever radical theology they had could be traced back to the ideas and writings of Origen.

In Cassian's own experience of "Origenism", the Tall Brothers, who were famous "Origenist" monks in Egypt, were expelled from Egypt by Theophilus of Alexandria in 399. Ostensibly, the reason for this expulsion was the controversy over the festal letter of

Theophilus in that year as well as the interpretation of the "image of God" as will be seen in the discussion of the anthropomorphite controversy below. The Tall Brothers were connected to what was considered an "Origenist" idea—the complete denial of the image of God in humans. However, while this is the spark for their expulsion, politics played a role, as well as general movement of aversion to more speculative Origenist ideas, which grew in fervour over the years until Origen's more controversial writings were condemned in the Fifth Ecumenical Council of 553.[35]

One of the main criticisms of Origen, and later Evagrius, is the precosmic creation and fall of souls which were then given bodies according to the level of their corruption. This idea centres not only on creation itself, but the origin of the soul, its relationship to the body, and, later, as the issues develop, the justice and grace of God. Methodius, Jerome, and Theophilus all attacked this Origenist idea.[36] According to Origen, the image and likeness of God resides within the *nous*, created with a heavenly body,[37] which then fell and was given an earthly body in order to regain its former Unity with God. For Evagrius, the *nous* was created without a body because it was a part of the Unity of the Divinity, but when it fell, it became called a *psyche* (soul), losing the image it had been created with, and received a material body. Therefore, through ascetic discipline, a rational being must work toward purging the soul of sin in order to regain its Unity with the Trinity at the Last Judgment. Aversion to this understanding of the creation and relationship of body and soul caused some to declare that body and soul were created together necessitating that the resurrection include both body and soul, as well as implying that the "image and likeness" of God includes the body. These reactions are seen in the anthropomorphite controversy explained below. The anti-Origenist movement flared up other controversial theological ideas.

[35] Evagrius Ponticus, too, was condemned at this Council.
[36] Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, p.196.
[37] Origen, *De Principiis* 2.2.2

Cassian was clearly part of a community influenced by the ideas of both Origen, as well as Evagrius who himself was an ardent student of Origen while also further developing ideas originally found in Origen's works in a way not found in them originally. While it is unclear if Cassian and Germanus travelled with the Tall Brothers on their flight to Constantinople, it is probable that they left Egypt around this time. They at least seem to be in Constantinople by 404 when they are both mentioned by Palladius as having provided receipts for all the items in the cathedral treasury after the great fire that occurred there in June on the notice that John Chrysostom was again to be sent into exile.[38] Although it is difficult to reconstruct fully Cassian's life, it is likely that he and Germanus would have left Egypt during the exodus and would have reached Constantinople well before 404 – long enough for Cassian to be ordained a deacon by John Chrysostom, and for he and Germanus to be put in charge of the cathedral treasury.[39] Therefore, if our current biography is correct, they would have seen for themselves the violent and forceful expulsion of the Tall Brothers from Egypt for being Origenists. They also would have experienced in John Chrysostom's own troubles with Theophilus, who disapproved of Chrysostom's tolerance of the Origenists in Constantinople.[40]

Cassian and Germanus also carried letters from Chrysostom's supporters to Rome in order to help his plight to get reinstated in the East. Although Rome supported Chrysostom, the attempt to get a delegation to Constantinople was such a debacle,[41] that Cassian would probably have been disheartened to return eastwards and would have found Rome's

[38] Palladius, *Dialogus* 3; cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, p.252.
[39] For Cassian being ordained by Chrysostom, cf. Gennadius, *De viris inlustribus* 62, p.82.7-8. Cassian himself admits to being ordained a deacon by "a bishop's hands" in *Inst.* 11.18, and that it was Chrysostom who brought him into the "sacred ministry" in *De Inc.* 7.31.1, for more on this, cf. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.13. Also, that Cassian and Germanus might have been in charge of the treasury is evidenced by their providing the receipt for all the items in the cathedral treasury after the fire in June 404, cf. note 38 above
[40] Cf. Theophilus had also wanted to appoint Isidore as bishop of Constantinople instead of Chrysostom, but was "allegedly threatened" by Eutropius, the imperial chamberlain, if he did not support Chrysostom; cf. Sokrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 6.2, 6.7, 6.9, 6.15, 6.17; Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* 8.13, 8.14, 8.17; Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, p.23, 46-47
[41] For the attempt of the Roman delegation to reach Constantinople, cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, p.276-281.

favourable view a better atmosphere. However, Rome was not isolated from the arguments over the safety of Origen's works. While the Latin West had a different experience of Origen and "Origenism" than the Greek East, nevertheless Origen is as present from an early stage in Latin authors as in Greek. It is clear from Jerome's own testament that Hilary of Poitiers, Eusebius of Vercelli, Victorinus of Pettau, and Ambrose all knew and used Origen's works.[42] However, in the late fourth century, Jerome was a crucial player in the reputation of Origen. Jerome himself translated works of Origen until around 395. Also around this time a debate was rising over whether Origen's texts could be considered at all safe or beneficial to read. Some believed that as long as one was careful of the more speculative ideas – which were most likely interpolations – then the rest of his works were beneficial. However, others believed that the more speculative ideas fit so well within his overall schema that they must be his own and therefore his works are to be completely condemned.[43]

Rufinus and John of Jerusalem continued to support the legitimacy of Origen's works and the necessity of them to the theology of the Church.[44] After 395, Jerome no longer supported further translation of Origen's works and his circle of friends in Rome were constantly badgering Rufinus for his continued work on translating. This is especially true of his translation of the *Peri Archon,* or the *De Principiis,* which Pammachius led the rally against.[45] The continued argument over the translation of Origen's works into Latin, with the key players of Rufinus and Jerome, was known throughout the entire Latin West. Interestingly, Sulpicius Severus, in his *Dialogus,* relates that Postumianus, who recounts the

[42] cf. Jerome, *Vita Malchi* 5/6; *Chronicon* II.39-45, II.48; also cf. G.K. Van Andel, "Sulpicius Severus and Origenism", *Vigiliae Christianae* 34, p.282.
[43] It is important to note here again that while these are the two sides of an argument concerning the legitimacy of Origen's works in fifth century Christianity, anyone whose ideas or works might have had the slightest connection to an idea in Origen's works could be condemned for "Origenism". The issue is multi-faceted and difficult to pin down as any dichotomy of ideas concerning Origen. Therefore, it is necessary to be aware that while "Origenist" could be used as a condemnation, the actual connection of an "Origenist" to the actual controversial ideas in Origen must be investigated.
[44] Van Andel, "Sulpicius Severus and Origenism", p.281; also cf. Rufinus, *De adulteratione librorum Origine,* and the preface to his translation of the *Peri Archon* (*De Principiis*).
[45] cf. Jerome, *Epistula* 83; Van Andel, "Sulpicius Severus and Origenism", p.281; and Francis Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345-411): his life and works,* Ph.D Thesis, Catholic University of America, 1944, p.97.

argument going on in Alexandria over Origen, considers it to be "an *error* rather than a *haeresis*".[46] However, Van Andel shows how, while Sulpicius Severus gives Postumianus' account of the controversy over Origen's works in his *Dialogus*, only a few years earlier in 397, Sulpicius touches on one of the most controversial ideas connected to Origen in his *Vita Martini*. During one of his many confrontations with the Devil, St. Martin suggests that if the Devil repented, then in His great mercy, God may forgive him. Sulpicius uses his narrator's voice to call this a *praesumptio* on Martin's part, and excuses it as a symptom of holiness and utter faith in God.[47]

Therefore, through the works of Rufinus, Jerome, and Sulpicius Severus, the controversy over Origen and his works would have been known in the Latin West. Origen's works were condemned by Pope Anastasius of Rome in 400, shortly after the condemnation by Theophilus in Alexandria.[48] Evagrius was closely associated with the ideas of Origen, not only through his own works, but also through Jerome's own words. This then means that Evagrius would have been known to be controversial in both the Greek East and Latin West. Furthermore, Cassian would have known for himself Evagrius' close ties with the Tall Brothers, and of Jerome's later condemnation of Evagrian ideas through his attacks on other controversies (as seen below) which may only have enhanced his reticence at not only mentioning Evagrius' name, but also his divergence from some of the older monk's more controversial ideas.

[46] Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogus* I.7; in this passage, Postumianus also tells of the implied possible redemption of the Devil as a major point of contention among those fighting over Origen in Alexandria – a point necessary to keep in mind for Chapter Three of this thesis and which will be revisited.
[47] Sulpicius Severus, *Vita Martini* 22.5; also cf. Van Andel, "Sulpicius Severus and Origenism" for an excellent discussion of the presence and meaning of this passage.
[48] Origen's works were also condemned by Venerius, Bishop of Milan, and the imperial authority soon after. cf. Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogus* I.6; Francis Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia* p.128; and Van Andel, "Sulpicius Severus and Origenism", p.282.

Intro.2.2: Anthropomorphism

In the time leading up to Evagrius' death, the central theological issues were focused on understanding and defining the divinity within the limitations of human vocabulary: from understanding the relationship of the three persons in the one nature of the Trinity to defining the relationship of Christ's two natures within His one person. This shift in focus to the second person of the Trinity is connected to the necessity of understanding what it meant to have been created in the "image and likeness of God", especially after the Nicaean confirmation of the full equality of the Trinity. Questions concerning the nature of the humanity within Christ and the implications of the Incarnation were linked to the need to understand the conflict of good and evil within the human being.

In 399, a controversy sparks between "anthropomorphites" and "Origenists" over the interpretation of the image and likeness of God in Genesis 1:26-27. The anthropomorphites are traditionally viewed from the lens of their opponents, like Cassian, Socrates, and Sozomen. In this traditional view, the anthropomorphites are ignorant, uneducated monks who believe that the image and likeness of God means that both the body and soul were created in His image, and therefore God has a body. The main spark of the "controversy" is a festal letter of Theophilus of Alexandria in 399. First he denies the image and likeness of God in fallen humanity – the "Origenist" point of view – and then, after an uproar by these ignorant monks, he changes his mind completely and confirms the image in fallen humanity, and, according to some, the body of God.

Elizabeth Clark notes that during the 390s, the struggle for the supremacy of Christianity over Egyptian paganism was a focus of Theophilus. For him, it was not only conversion, but also the destruction of pagan images that was important. Pagan statues not only represented the pagan gods, but were even considered to have demonic presences linked to them since Christians explained the pagan gods as demons in disguise. The issues with

pagan statues in the late fourth century were linked to the "'iconophobia' inherent in early Christian literature dealing with images".[49] Clark elucidates the importance of the destruction of pagan images in Alexandria when she states that this "was undertaken in the very years during which monks in Egypt debated whether human beings had retained 'the image of God' after the first sin and whether mental images deterred us from true worship: the 390s could well have been designated 'the decade of the image'."[50] This "decade of the image" refers not only to Theophilus' efforts to destroy pagan imagery, but also his central role in the anthropomorphite controversy, which focuses on the interpretation of the "image of God".

According to the traditional account, Theophilus originally ascribed to the view of Origenists like Evagrius, the Tall Brothers, and the teachings of Origen himself. Evagrius in particular stresses the necessity of casting out any type of image for God, which is based on his understanding of a precosmic creation of the *noes*, which then fell to become souls thereby losing the image of God the *nous* was originally created with. The denial of the image is especially prevalent in his doctrine of imageless prayer. In his work, *On Prayer*, Evagrius explains that during prayer, God is found not with the earthly vision, but a spiritual one in which one finds a formless light.[51] Theophilus supports the incorporeality of God in his paschal letter in 399.[52] Cassian mentions the reception of this letter in Conference Ten, which is on prayer. He relates that a revered elder, Serapion, laments that he feels as though his God has been taken from him since he can no longer picture Him during prayer.[53] Antoine Guillaumont suggests that through this evidence it may be possible to claim that Evagrius'

[49] Troels Myrup Kristensen, "Religious Conflict and Late Antique Alexandria: Christian responses to 'pagan' statues in the fourth and fifth centuries CE", in *Alexandria: a cultural and religious melting pot*, Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2010, p.167.
[50] Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: the cultural contruction of an early Christian debate*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992, p.55.
[51] Cf. Evagrius Ponticus, *On Prayer*
[52] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 10.3.5-6; for primary sources which report on the whole of the controversy, cf. Sokrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 6.7-23; Sozomen, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 8.11-28; Palladius, *Dialogus* 6-8
[53] Cf. Cassian, *Conferences*, 10.3.5-6

idea of pure prayer may have set off the anthropomorphite controversy.[54] Whatever his influence may have been, by the time the controversy culminates, Evagrius himself has most likely died, yet his ideas have been passed on to his students. After Theophilus' paschal letter was received among the monks of Egypt, there was such a vehemence against the idea that the bishop of Alexandria, although once a fan of Evagrius himself, having once tried to make him bishop of Thmuis,[55] wrote another letter to the monks of the Egyptian desert supporting the idea that if man were made in God's image, then He has a bodily form similar to the human body.

Supporters of the Evagrian and Origenist idea, like the Tall Brothers, continued to believe that it is impossible to know the divine form, and wrong to conceive of Him with the same form as a human body. They therefore left the desert and sought refuge in Palestine as well as in Constantinople with John Chrysostom.[56] Although Evagrius died before the expulsion of the Tall Brothers from Egypt, he had close ties to them and is even mentioned among them in Jerome's *Letter* 133 in 414 as the "Origenist leaders of the Lower Egyptian monasticism".[57] Cassian, on the other hand, seems to have been present in much of the turmoil surrounding the controversy. Although there is debate about the details of Cassian's biography, historians generally agree that he and Germanus left Egypt with the exodus of the Tall Brothers and their supporters.[58]

Thus is the traditional account as is found in Cassian's Conference 10 and the accounts of Socrates and Sozomen. However, beginning in the early twentieth century, scholars have been questioning this account of the anthropomorphites, starting with Étienne

[54] Antione Guillaumont, *Les "Kephalaia Gnostica" d'Évagre le Pontique et l'histoire de l'origénisme chez les Grecs et chez les Syriens*, Paris: Universite de Paris, 1962, pp.59-61
[55] Sokrates, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 4.23; cf. Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.18; and J.N.D. Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, p. 192.
[56] Cf. Jerome, *Epistula* 92.1.3; Palladius, *Dialogus* 7; Sokrates, *Hist. Eccl.* 6.7; Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* 8.13
[57] Jerome, *Letter* 133.3.6-7: "Ammonius, Eusebius Euthymius, Evagrius himself, Or, Isidore, and many others…"; cf. Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.20; and Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, p.180.
[58] Owen Chadwick, *John Cassian*, p.15; Columba Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.12-13; and Augustine Casiday, *Tradition and Theology in St John Cassian*, p.1.

Drioton and Fr. Georges Florovsky in the first half of the century, with the added recent insight and new light shed by Alexander Golitzin and Paul Patterson.[59] First of all, Theophilus may not have been doing such an about face, but rather attempting to find a middle ground between the Evagrian denial of the *imago Dei* in fallen humanity and the "anthropormorphite" inclusion of the body in the *imago Dei*. Patterson suggests that Theophilus "was no Origenist, yet he opposed anthropomorphism".[60] Even Jerome also was working toward a theological middle ground.[61]

Furthermore, through reading *The Life of Aphou*, which is a representation of the life of a certain monk who opposed the ideas of Theophilus on the *imago Dei* in 399, it begins to become clearer that the anthropomorphites were probably not simplistically trying to ascribe a body to God at all, as Cassian portrays them, but rather were working through a Christological issue. This text most likely comes from the late fifth century, after Theophilus has died.[62] It is set up as a conversation between Theophilus and Aphou on the image of God. Aphou counters Theophilus' argument that the leprous or lame could not possibly be bearing the physical image of God by citing Genesis 1:26-7 showing that this passage was at the centre of the debate just as in Cassian. As Theophilus continues to deny the image of God in post-lapsarian man, Aphou eventually uses the Eucharist in order to explain his point. The

[59] cf. Étienne Drioton, "La discussion d'un moine anthropomorphite audien avec le patriarche Théophile d'Alexandrie", *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 20, Paris: August Picard, 1915-1917, pp.92-128; Georges Florovsky, *The Collected Works of Father Georges Florovsky*, Belmont, MA: Nordland, 1975; also, Graham Gould, "The Image of God and the Anthropomorphite Controversy in Fourth Century Monasticism", *Origeniana Quinta*, Brian Daley, (ed.), Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992, pp.549-557; Gedaliahu Stroumsa, "The incorporeality of God: context and implications of Origen's position", *Religion* 13.4, 1983, pp.345-358; Alexander Golitzin, "'The demons suggest an illusion of God's glory in a form': controversy over the divine body and vision of glory in some late fourth, early fifth century monastic literature," *Studia Monastica* 44, 2002, pp.13-44, and "The form of God and the vision of the Glory: some thoughts on the Anthropomorphite controversy of 399", first published in Romanian translation by I. Ica Jr., in *Mistagogia: Experientia lui Dumnezeu* in Orthoxie, Sibiu: Deisis, 1998, pp.184-267, second publication in English on: www.marquette.edu/maqom/morphe.html; and Paul A. Patterson, *Visions of Christ: The Anthropomorphite Controversy of 399 CE*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 68, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012

[60] Paul Patterson, *Visions of Christ: The Anthropomorphite Controversy of 399 CE*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum68, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012, p.35.

[61] cf. Jerome, *Contra Johannem* 11, *Tractatus in Psalmos* 93, *In Amos* I.ii.1/3; also cf. Patterson, *Visions of Christ*, pp.35-38 for more on Jerome's condemnation of the anthropomorphic view while also staunchly condemning controversial Origenist ideas.

[62] Patterson, *Visions of Christ*, p.52 n.102.

Eucharist: "if the bread and wine, which do not much resemble Christ's body and blood, are nevertheless regarded as Christ's body and blood, then humans, who do not much resemble God, should nevertheless be regarded as bearing God's image."[63] Furthermore, the participation in the Eucharist marks "the advent of the New Covenant in anticipation of the age to come where the blessed shall be fed by the light of the body of the Glory and where, indeed, believers are fed even now by the same body."[64] Aphou also continues to use the so-called *Kaiserbildargument* in order to explain the image of God present in humans.

Patterson, following the conclusions of Drioton and Golitzin, suggests that this argument of the relationship of a statue of an emperor to the emperor himself shows that Aphou is indeed concluding that God has a body, albeit of a different material than the human body.[65] This then would give credence to Cassian's portrayal of the anthropomorphites as ascribing a body to God, and therefore, in his interpretation, limiting the illimitable.[66] For Golitzin, "the story [of Aphou] is one of triumph of the desert's traditional wisdom over the philosophical learning of the Greeks".[67] The *Life of Aphou*, then, is firmly planted within the tradition of those whom Cassian portrays as simplistic and ignorant – perhaps because he is part of the Greek philosophical tradition over which Aphou represents the triumph.[68]

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[63] ibid, p.54

[64] Alexander Goliztin, "'The demons suggest an illusion of God's glory in a form': controversy over the divine body and vision of glory in some late fourth, early fifth century monastic literature", *Studia Monastica* 44, 2002, p.13

[65] Aphou may be following Athanasius in using this argument. Athanasius uses it to explain the relationship between the Father and the Son in *Contra Arianos* 3.5. However, Patterson suggests that Aphou's source is not Athanasius but actually Jewish tradition of interpretation of the image. cf. Patterson, *Visions of Christ*, p.58. On the other hand, Bumazhnov suggests that Aphou's use of the *Kaiserbildargument* is actually evidence of him connecting the image to non-corporeal characteristics within humanity. cf. Dmitij F. Bumazhnov, "Zur Interpretation der *Vita des seligen Aphu von Pemdje*", in *Origeniana Octava*, Leuven: Leuven University Press, pp.990-991

[66] Though it does not support Cassian's portrayal of them as simplistic and ignorant, which is most likely a device in order to discredit his opponents.

[67] Golitzin, "'The demons suggest an illusion of God's glory in a form'", p.11.

[68] That is not to suggest the Cassian was familiar with this work, rather that Golitzin's representation of the argument to be partly between traditional wisdom and Greek philosophy allows one an insight into Cassian's possible motives.

However, it is necessary to note here that Graham Gould has suggested that the evidence of Cassian and the Church historians, who were all part of the Greek philosophical tradition, is not enough to conclude an actual anthropomorphite sect within Egypt.[69] Golitzin has taken up this need to clarify the first-hand evidence apart from these and has shown that there is evidence not only from the *Apophthegmata* in Egypt, but also that the "anthropormophite" ideas were more widespread. He makes it clear that there is evidence "in Epiphanius' Audians [and] in Syria's and Diadochus' 'Messalians2'", as well as even in Palestine through "Cyril's Palestinian correspondents", and in anthropormorphites against which Augustine argues, that shows "traits and concerns which appear to be substantially identical".[70]

The connection to groups seeking advice and edification from Augustine and Cyril on anthropormorphic ideas further supports Patterson's argument that it was actually a Christological issue rather than a controversy on the bodily form of God himself. Their ideas stem from ancient Jewish mystical traditions that can also be found in certain Nag Hammadi texts showing the continuation of these ideas through the fourth century. While it is possible that the Pachomians were familiar with such texts, it is the connection to the anthropomorphite defense of the *imago Dei* and the search for the vision of the pre-incarnate Christ that is important. In his conclusion, Patterson repeatedly refers to the "Evagrians" which can be as conflated and disputed a term as "anthropomorphites".[71] It is clear that the reference to a group of Evagrians is meant more to elucidate two extreme sides of an argument between which other theologians worked to find common ground.[72] Evagrius

[69] Graham Gould, "The image of God and the anthropormophite controversy in fourth century monasticism", *Origeniana Quinta*, Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992, p.554.
[70] Golitzin, "The form of God and the vision of the Glory", www.marquette.edu/maqom/morphe.html
[71] As well as "Origenist".
[72] Evagrius' denial of the image of God in men is based on his cosmology through Creation; however, Cassian does not follow this same theory of Creation and actually allows for a marred image of God to be present in humans. Therefore, it is interesting that he should portray them the way he does when he also is affirming the presence of the image in post-lapsarian man. Perhaps he portrays them in such a negative light in order to

certainly denied the *imago Dei* in rational beings, and firmly denied the presence of any images in prayer.[73] Whereas the anthropomorphites affirmed the presence of the *imago Dei* in fallen humanity, while seeking the vision of the pre-incarnate Christ in prayer. Theophilus considers the *imago Dei* to have been lost in the Fall, but restored in the Incarnation.[74] He opposed "locating the image of God in the divine body of Christ and, by extension, in the human body".[75]

While it certainly seems to be seen that Evagrius and the anthropomorphites were on two sides of the argument, Patterson suggests that in actuality, they are descendants of the same Jewish mystical tradition, which can be traced through Philo of Alexandria and the Nag Hammadi texts. In fact, "the anthropomorphite 'heresy' does not represent a departure from traditional Christian 'orthodoxy'; rather, the departure was being made by the Evagrians – away from an ancient tradition in which the Son functions as the visible image of the invisible Father, and in the direction of a Nicene orthodoxy in which Father and Son (together with the Holy Spirit) share the attribute of invisibility. The anthropomorphites, then, were the bearers of the older tradition."[76]

Intro.2.3: Pelagian controversy

During the unknown years of Cassian's life, 404-419, another controversy was gaining prominence: the Pelagian controversy. "The questions at stake were close to those being

purposely distance himself from a similar interpretation, especially since he does continue with Evagrius' imageless prayer. This point will be brought under further consideration in Chapter Three.

[73] This in itself turns out to be a controversial idea even separate from the *imago Dei* because of the Evagrian idea of *apatheia* which Jerome so vehemently opposes. Patterson is clear to say however that while Evagrian prayer was "*image*less, it was not *vision*less", which is certainly an important distinction to make and will be elucidated further in Chapter 4; cf. Patterson, *Visions of Christ*, p.38.

[74] cf. Theophilus, *Homilia in mysticam coena,* PG 77:1020B-1021B

[75] Patterson, *VoC*, p.149

[76] Ibid, p.153.

fought in the East over Origen", as in the anthropomorphite issue.[77] The state of human creation and what was lost in the Fall is interpreted through the lens of defining the image of God in the anthropormorphism issue; for the Pelagian debate, it is not only what is lost in the Fall, but how it then affects humanity's ability for salvation. The focus was on the nature of the relationship between sin and fallen humanity, as well as how much agency is available to human beings in their pathway to salvation (in which the image and likeness of God is also crucial). Furthermore, like anthropomorphism, while there are the key opponents – Augustine and the Pelagians (the most prominent of whom are Pelagius himself, Caelestius, and Julian of Eclanum – there was more to the discussion and argument than only two opposing sides. Middle ground between two opposing "sides" was sought by others such as Cassian and Jerome.[78] Also, like the anthropomorphite and Origenist issues, "Pelagianism as an enduring theological heresy is largely an Augustinian construct, one that differs in significant ways from Pelagianism as a historical movement."[79]

Pelagianism is called such because it is named after Pelagius, the first man to espouse (what became) controversial views on the agency of the human will. Pelagius lived in Rome for about ten years before he fled the city, with his friend, Caelestius, in 411 after the sack of Rome in 410 by Alaric.[80] Pelagius and Caelestius travelled to Carthage, where Caelestius stayed while Pelagius continued East. Soon after they arrived in Carthage, their views were already coming under controversy. The Council of Carthage in 411 focused on original sin and condemned Caelestius through six anathemas.[81] The focus of the controversy at the

[77] Dominic Keech, *The Anti-Pelagian Christology of Augustine of Hippo, 396-430*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, p.3
[78] cf. Stuart Squires, "Jerome on Sinlessness: a *via media* between Augustine and Pelagius," *The Heythrop Journal*, Oxford: John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 2013, p. 4; also cf. Steven Driver, *John Cassian and the Reading of Egyptian Monastic Culture*, p.303
[79] Michael R. Rackett, "What's wrong with Pelagianism? Augustine and Jerome on the dangers of Pelagius and his followers", *Augustinian Studies* 33.2, 2002, p.223.
[80] B.R. Rees, *Pelagius: a reluctant heretic*, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1988, p.1.
[81] Michael R. Rackett, "What's wrong with Pelagianism?", pp.223-224; also cf. Marius Mercator, *Commonitorium super nomine Caelestii*, Acta Consiliorum Oecumenicorum, I.V.1.66, and Augustine, *De gestis Pelagii*, 11.23

beginning was "the nature of sin, not the nature of grace", though it eventually becomes known as the Grace and Free Will debate.[82] While this particular council focused on Caelestius and was held in Carthage, Pelagius also continued to have vehement detractors further east. In 415, two councils were brought against Pelagius – one brought by Jerome and Orosius in July, and then another in Diospolis in December. Neither opponents succeeded in gaining the condemnation of Pelagius, but at the Synod of Diospolis, there was a clear "goal to associate Pelagius with some of Caelestius' teachings, especially those about grace".[83] Also, during the year between 412-415 Augustine was prolifically writing against the Pelagian and Caelestian ideas with his works, *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*, *De spiritu et littera*, *De perfection iustitiae hominis*, and *De natura et gratia*. Finally, in 418, a second Council of Carthage definitively rejected the view of Caelestius and Pelagius. However, a new student of their ideas began making Augustine's life more difficult: Julian of Eclanum. Augustine writes against Julian all the way until his death in 430, and in 431 at the Council of Ephesus, the Pelagian issue is put to bed – at least in the East. Pelagian ideas continue to live on in the West, as Pelagius' works continued to be read in places like Ireland, as well as through "Semi-Pelagianism", of which Cassian even is accused beginning with Prosper of Aquitaine. It is not until the second Synod of Orange in 529 that Pelagian ideas on the will are completely condemned.

It is important to note that while the first council in 411 focused on the definition of the nature of sin, through the prominence of Augustine's voice in the debate, the controversy ended up focusing on the nature of the relationship between God's grace and human free will. Thinking back to the previous controversies, one of the constant condemnations of Origenism is the theory of creation. For Origen (at least according to his opponents) and Evagrius, there is a precosmic movement of the *nous*, after which arose sin, vice, the body, and the material

[82] Rackett, "What's wrong with Pelagianism?", p.224
[83] Ibid, p.226.

world, which clearly places the image of God in the pre-fallen *nous* only, and the current state of humanity to be defined by its distance from God (including sin) in the material world. While this theory of creation firmly answers questions concerning the relationship of fallen humanity to the Divine, the state of the image, the implied sinful nature of humanity, as well as the agency of the will and grace (since the only way to rejoin with the original Unity is the destruction of the material world which only happens through the grace of God), it is too controversial. It is also not grounded in Scripture.[84]

It has already been shown that the anthropormorphites disagreed with this accounting of the image as they confirmed the image of God in fallen human nature. Yet the focus on that confirmation was not to work out the relationship between sin, the will, and God's grace, but rather the relationship of the human and divine in Christ, and therefore the relationship of fallen humanity to the divinity of the Trinity. Within the controversy surrounding the Pelagians, the scriptural creation takes point.[85] The focus was on the effect on fallen humanity of Adam's sin and what this means for humanity's pathway to salvation.

It was necessary to base creation in Scripture, which tells us that the fall of man occurred in Adam, not in a first then second creation. However, what exactly it means to have sinned "in Adam" is another question. Questions arose over whether the punishment in fallen humanity is that Adam's sinfulness is passed down to the entire human race through his flesh, or that mortality is the punishment of humanity. Are humans necessarily sinful as a fallen race? Or is there the possibility of being sinless before Judgment Day? Augustine focuses on the inherent sinfulness of the flesh and the entirety of what was lost in the Fall, and humanity's dependence on God's grace; however, the Pelagians focused on mortality as the

[84] It is interesting that Cassian is such a clear student of Evagrius, yet is more heavily grounded in Scripture than Evagrius. In fact, Scripture is his main evidence in his refutation of Nestorian Christology in the *De Incarnatione*.

[85] Augustine makes the point that one of the central issues is whether humanity sinned "in Adam" or outside of him. cf. Augustine, *Epistula* 166.9.27; *De Civitate Dei* 11.23, 12.14&21, 21.17; also cf. Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, p.196

punishment of Adam, as well as what might have been retained, or given by God as a pathway to salvation, in the form of the human will.[86]

Although the creation story found in Origen was not upheld by Pelagius, Gerald Bostock has suggested that Origen's assertion of human freedom is found in Pelagius. Jerome connects Pelagianism to the controversial Origenism, but Bostock explains that "what he failed to observe and should have acknowledge is the parallel between Origen's defense of human freedom in the face of Stoic fatalism and Gnostic determinism and the defense by Pelagius of human freedom in the face of Manichaean fatalism and Augustinian determinism."[87] Affirming the creation story of Genesis necessitates an explanation of sin and the state of fallen humanity not explicitly found in Scripture.

Pelagian ideas concerning the origin of the soul and the place of sin within it strongly worked against deterministic ideas. Caelestius certainly had a problem with the doctrine of original sin which predicated that humanity be sinful. Dominic Keech notes an interesting connection between Caelestius' aversion to original sin, which Augustine espouses, and Rufinus the Syrian's aversion to the Origenist creation because original sin would also be "the corollary of Origen's teaching on the fall of souls from a premundane state."[88] Therefore, it is interesting that both Pelagius and Augustine could be influenced by the ideas and writings of Origen, yet use them in two sides of a debate. For Augustine, Keeach suggests that he was influenced by the idea that humanity is necessarily sinful after the corruption of the Fall. However, Pelagius uses not the state of sin within a fallen humanity

[86] For the Pelagian focus on mortality, cf. Pelagius, *In Romanos* 5:12; also, Augustine cites this as a view of Pelagius from his work, *De Natura*, in *De Natura et Gratia* 9,10. He also refers to this in Julian of Eclanum in his work, *Opus Imperfectum* II.56.1, II.61, II.194

[87] Gerald Bostock, "The Influence of Origen on Pelagius and Western Monasticism", *Origeniana Septima*, Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999, p.384.

[88] Dominic Keech, *The Anti-Pelagian Christology of Augustine of Hippo, 396-430*, Oxford: Oxford Scholarshop Online, 2013, p.20. Keech uses this point to further his argument that Augustine was perhaps more influenced by Origen than previously considered. Through this larger argument, Augustine would also be an excellent example of a student of Origen who never mentions his name – or at the very least an example of the pervasiveness of Origen's teachings by this period.

from the original creation, but rather the agency of the will to work toward salvation without a predetermination of salvation.

According to Julian of Eclanum, the idea that sin is transmitted to the entire human race through Adam would mean that sin in human beings occurs "from necessity".[89] The idea that sin is necessary dooms humanity to more than death, which is certainly the punishment of Adam that is transmitted to the entire race:

> "if Adam's sin injured everyone, even those who weren't sinners, then Christ's righteousness ought to save even nonbelievers; that baptized parents should not transmit the sin they have lost to their offspring; and that if only the flesh, not the soul, is passed from parents to children, then only the flesh, not the soul, should be punished."[90]

It is clear here in Elizabeth's Clark summation of one of the key issues the Pelagians had with the implications of Adam's punishment being sinfulness that the problem lies within the relationship of the body and soul to sin. For the Pelagian opponents, this also has important Christological implications as it may change the effectiveness of the Incarnation, or even suggest that non-Christians could be saved.

However, while the Pelagian efforts worked to save the human being from inherent sinfulness, they also condemned even the smallest sin. Thus the Pelagians stressed the importance of being free of sin, which creates opponents in both Jerome and Cassian. Augustine's attack against the Pelagians focused on the relationship of God's grace and human free will, the theory of predestination of salvation through God's foreknowledge, and, finally, the importance of infant baptism in cleansing infants of the sin inherited from their parents through the lust found in procreation. However, Jerome and Cassian focused on the possibility of sinlessness implied by the Pelagians. Here is where the heaviness of Jerome's condemnation of Evagrius' *apatheia* to mean "sinlessness" for Cassian becomes clear.[91] He connects this *apatheia* to sinlessness, claims Evagrius as one of the leading Origenist's of the

[89] Julian of Eclanum, *Libellius fidei*, 3.15
[90] Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, p.210
[91] More on Jerome's condemnation of *apatheia* in Chapter Four.

desert, and also connects Origenism to Pelagianism. The idea that one could be sinless vastly undermines the majesty of Christ's Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. The Pelagian opponents are appalled at the implication this brings: the God's grace is *not* as powerful and unknowable as they believe; thus one of the reasons Augustine focused on stressing the grace of God in his debates against the Pelagians.

Cassian also stresses the necessity and power of the grace of God, but he gives the wil more efficacy on the road to salvation – this will be discussed in Chapter four of this work. However, it is necessary here to consider how Cassian portrays Pelagianism. Interestingly, he does not mention Pelagius in the *Conferences* when he is working out his theology of grace. Rather, he condemns Nestorius' Christology in *On the Incarnation* by stating that it is *ex Pelagiano errore*.[92] The first time he mentions the Pelagians is in Book One, where he is listing the heresies that have come before this one. However, he states that Nestorius has found his foundation for his controversial ideas in Pelagianism: "in saying that Jesus Christ had lived as a mere man without any stain of sin, they actually went to far as to declare that men could also be without sin if they liked."[93] Here it is clear that Cassian considered the Pelagian error to be centred around the possibility of sinlessness. Further from this he considers the Pelagians to espouse that Christ was a mere man and it is through his example that men see that they can become sinless. Not only is his issue sinlessness, but it is also the implication that Christ was anything less than fully God, as well as the fact that this would take away from the majesty of the Incarnation.[94]

Through the Origenist, Anthropomorphite, and Pelagian controversies, it is clear that there were serious problems with the Origenist, or especially, Evagrian, ideas on creation. This atmosphere makes it virtually impossible for him to continue with Evagrian creation in

[92] Cassian, *De Incarnatione* 1.3; also cf. *De Inc.* 1.4, 5.1-2, 5.4, 6.14, 7.21
[93] Cassian, *De Incarnatione* 1.3
[94] Cassian also states that the Pelagians asserted that Christ was "born a mere man" (*De Inc*. 5.2). His focus in the *De Inc.* is the full divinity and full humanity of Christ. He repeatedly states that the Pelagians considered Christ to be only a man, taking away from His divinity. For more on Cassian's Christology, see Chapter Four.

his own theology. We also have already seen that he directly mentions the anthropormophites as well as the Pelagians, supporting the argument against the theory of Tzamalikos. Furthermore, we have seen in that the next controversy, Christology, is directly related to those that have come before. Cassian does not purport Evagrius' creation, he has a different anthropology and understanding of the image as well as the will.[95] These differing views necessitate a different understanding of Christology as well as one's understanding of Creation is the basis for one's understanding of Christology; therefore, it is now necessary to flesh out the Christological atmosphere for both Evagrius and Cassian in order to have the fullest picture of the theological conversation affecting nearly every choice Cassian makes in his ascetic theology.

Intro.2.4: Christological controversy

During the 4th and 5th centuries, there is a tension between the technical language in Christology and its implications. Contained within the person of Christ are vital realities and implications concerning both humanity—what it means to be human in both the intended, created state and the current fallen state; as well as how salvation could ever be possible—and divinity—understanding the Trinity and humanity's relationship to it. Therefore, if the conclusions that could be drawn from one's Christology seem to compromise the divinity or the humanity within Christ, one could quickly be deemed heretical. Even when Cassian adds his ideas into what had already been a long debate—and will continue to be after—he, from the very first book of his Christological work, *De incarnatione Domini contra Nestorium,* enumerates a number of heretical groups that have come before the current heresy of Nestorianism: the Ebionites, Sabellians, Arians, Eunomians, Macedonians, Photinians, and

[95] These will all be made clear through in-depth comparison and investigation throughout this work.

Apollinarians. After this lengthy list, he eventually goes on to add Pelagius and give an extensive exposition on Leporius before finally turning directly to Nestorius.[96]

In his enumeration of these heresies and explanations of what they are, the issues at the heart of the Christological and Trinitarian debates become clear. Cassian mentions errors concerning the relationships of the three persons of the Trinity to each other as well as errors concerning the definition of Christ Himself. These heretics were thought to have misconceived Christ's divine nature, His humanity, and/or their union with each other. There were questions about the quality of the divine within Christ both in substance and equality to the Trinity; the characteristics of the humanity within Christ, its fullness and role in the work of Christ; and the nature of the union between the divinity and humanity within Him – when it occurred, how it allows for our redemption (especially in contrast to our condemnation through Adam), and the type of union itself.[97] Each aspect of the Christological debate, whether it is an argument over technical language and its implications or a theological idea, reflects these important issues—issues that are woven with the delicate and complex relationship of creation and Creator.

However, beyond these universal issues, it is also crucial to understand one's focus and context. Rowan Greer makes this clear for understanding Apollinarius' Christology in his article, "The Man from Heaven", by stating: "We cannot rightly assess Apollinaris' account of Christ's person without emphasizing that it derives from his convictions about redemption."[98] Greer goes on to say that Apollinarius' focus is such that Christ's "humanity becomes a way of talking about our becoming God, rather than about God's becoming

[96] Interestingly, Marie-Anne Vannier points out that this introduction of heretical groups and ideas shows from the very beginning of his third work that Cassian intends to attack Nestorius and the important part of the title is more *contra Nestorium* as opposed to *De Incarnatione Domini*. While Cassian does develop his Christological ideas, he is extremely concerned with the errors in Nestorius' Christology. cf. Marie-Anne Vannier, "Le *De Incarnatione Domini* de Jean Cassien," in *Jean Cassien entre l'orient et l'occident: actes du colloque international organisé par le New Europe College en collaboration avec la Ludwig Boltzman Gesellschaft, Bucarest, 27-28 septembre 2001,* Cristian Badilita & Attila Jakab (eds.), Editions Beauchesne, 2003, p.53-4.
[97] John Cassian, *De incarnatione Domini contra Nestorium* 1.2-4.
[98] Rowan Greer, "The Man from Heaven: Paul's Last Adam and Apollinaris' Christ," in *Paul and the Legacies of Paul,* William S. Babcock (ed.), Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1990, p.165.

human."[99] This implication is in line with Apollinarius' condemnation, which will be taken into account further along in this discussion; however, it is important that Greer is pointing out that while the implications of his views made his ideas controversial, it is necessary to understand the broader contextual forces in order to appreciate the motivation behind the views expressed.

This same approach must be included in our understanding of Evagrius and Cassian's Christologies. Both monks are concerned with the ascetic life, which derives from Creation and the Movement/Fall. The imperfection that exists in the current state of humanity and which came about through the Fall is the foundation of the ascetic life and of understanding each and every piece from the practical to the contemplative. It is the journey to correct this imperfection and close distance from God that necessitates and drives the ascetic life. Therefore, while asceticism's final focus is salvation, it is only through gaining the knowledge of the relationship of Creator and created through the act of Creation and the subsequent Fall, together with Christology that will allow for a true understanding and practice of the ascetic life and, therefore, salvation.[100]

a. Evagrius' Christological Context

When considering the Christological debate, modern scholars have tried to find clarifying terminology and groupings in order to help wade through the mire of similarities and differences in each theologian's Christology. The "Word-flesh" and "Word-man" terminology set out by Grillmeier was landmark in helping scholars sort through Christology. The Word-flesh type of Christology, associated with the "Alexandrian school", is one in

[99] Ibid, p.167.

[100] Brian Daley makes this clear: "[eschatology] is the logical conclusion of the biblical doctrine of creation, in the attempt to foresee the fulfillment of creation's purpose. For the Christian, eschatology is the final stage of Christology, provided it is conceived in historical or dynamic terms – provided, in other words, that it sees the person of Jesus not simply as the incarnate Word of God, but as the revelation of 'what was from the beginning' (1 Jn 1:1): God's saving design for all humanity." cf. Brian E. Daley, S.J., *Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p.2.

which the Word is understood to be the animating principle in the humanity of Christ, following the Platonic anthropological idea that man consists of body and the foreign animating spirit, the soul. In Christ, the Word is considered to take the place of the soul in this union, since it is the archetype of the soul itself. This is in opposition to the Word-man type, associated with the "Antiochene school", which is based on an Aristotelian anthropology where "flesh" is understood to be the whole man – made up of an inseparable body and soul – that is then united to the Word.[101] While these terms and associations can be helpful in understanding the connections between different writers, it also can be a hindrance casting a dappled shadow highlighting certain aspects while obscuring other important details.[102] Therefore it is important to take them into account in their aid, but also to look beyond these terms and groups in order to take a full account of each Christology.

Another important issue to consider is the need to place one's contemporary context from later interpretation and condemnation. Julia Konstantinovsky points out that many scholars, like Guillaumont, have misinterpreted Evagrius' Christology by taking into account the later development of the Christological debate and his condemnation in 553. She states that, "the drawback of this approach consists in failing to recognize that Evagrius' writings were no polemic and were written for particular purposes in a context of their own and not as a contribution to the Cyril-Nestorius debate."[103] Many of the theologians of his time were involved directly in the Christological debate – whether in answering against Apollinarians and Eunomians, like the Cappadocians, or beginning the transition of terminology and issues that led to the Cyril-Nestorius debate and eventually Chalcedon. However, while Evagrius was not writing as a contribution to these debates, nevertheless he still would have been

[101] Aloys Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, Basel: Herder, 1979.; also cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines,* p.281

[102] For an excellent exposition on the advantages and disadvantages of these modern scholarly organizations, especially in reference to the Cyril-Nestorius debate, cf. Paul L. Gavrilyuk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God: the Dialectics of Patristic Thought*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp.135-141.

[103] Julia Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus: The Making of a Gnostic*, p.110.

affected by the arguments and teachings contained within them. Kevin Corrigan makes the suggestion that while "we can argue that Evagrius should have known better [in some of his more radical ideas]…we cannot fairly read back the condemnations and monastic practices of a much later time onto a somewhat ambiguous account some 60 years before the Council of Chalcedon (451)."[104]

Therefore, looking to his contemporary context, an important event to consider for Evagrius is the condemnation of Apollinarius in 381 and the Cappadocian response to Apollinarianism.[105] In an attempt to develop his friend, Athanasius', ideas, Apollinarius expounded a Christology which J.N.D Kelly calls an "extreme Word-flesh" idea.[106] While this term is helpful in that it highlights Apollinarius' emphasis on the Logos as the directing agent within Christ, it seems to focus on the account of Apollinarianism from his contemporary detractors rather than his actual views. Since the Logos had been established as consubstantial with the Father in the Nicene Creed, it became necessary for some to focus on determining how humanity, which is changeable, temporal, and has the ability for sin, could be united to the divinity of the Logos, which is unchangeable, eternal, and immaterial. Necessary questions were raised in order to understand how Christ could achieve our redemption: is the definition of humanity that it is fallen? Where does the ability for sin lie – in body and/or soul? This question about the human soul is especially important when considering Apollinarius, who stresses that the Logos was the animating spirit within the body of Christ, which implies that He had no human soul because he considered this to be the way both to explain and ensure that the humanity within Christ was free from sin. For if he had a human soul, then he had a human will, and Apollinarius considered this not only to

[104] Kevin Corrigan, *Evagrius and Gregory: Mind, Soul, and Body in the 4th century*, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2009, p. 131.
[105] Julia Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus: The Making of a Gnostic*, p.149.
[106] J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 5th edition, London: A & C Black, 1989, p.291; Aloys Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*, Basel: Herder, 1979.

negate the necessity of His sinlessness, but also to bring up the possibility of a second identity in Christ, or at least a clash of two wills – one human and one divine.[107]

This view became an issue after the synod at Alexandria in 362, where it was agreed that "the Saviour did not have a body lacking a soul, sensibility, or intelligence. For it was impossible that, the Lord having become man on our behalf, His body should have been without intelligence, and the salvation not only of the body but of the soul as well was accomplished through the Word Himself."[108] Apollinarius' idea that the flesh is so united to the Word so as to form a man without need of a rational, human soul because of the animating archetype of the Word, was found to deny the salvation of the human soul. He was also attacked for calling the flesh of Christ the "heavenly flesh",[109] which was misunderstood as meaning that the flesh was heavenly and pre-existent, rather than that it was divine purely in its Unity with the Word because it never existed apart from the Word. Brian Daley points out that while Apollinarius does use language that seems to imply the eternity of the flesh, he also "strenuously denies holding that the actual flesh of the man Jesus is heavenly or eternal, even though we adore it as 'God's flesh'."[110] He goes on to emphasize the important idea developed by Rowan Greer: that "…such language seems intended to assert the same mutual predication of divine and human attributes in Christ that would later be called the 'communication of idioms'; but it does so in language that was easily misunderstood, and perhaps not always fully under control."[111] Here the tensions between language and implication become clear within the Christological debate. In his idea of the union between the Word and the flesh, Apollinarius seemed to place such emphasis on the divine nature of

[107] cf. ibid, p.290-296; and Richard A. Norris, Jr., *The Christological Controversy*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980, p.21-3.
[108] *Tom. ad Antioch. 7*, as translated in: J.N.D. Kelly, *ECD*, p.288.
[109] cf. Apollinarius, *Fragments* 116, 153, 160; and *anacephalaeosis* 29; cf. *Apollinaris von Laodicea und seine Schule: Texte und Untersuchungen*, Hans Lietzmann (ed.), Tübingen: Mohr, 1904.
[110] Brian Daley, "'Heavenly man' and 'Eternal Christ': Apollinarius and Gregory of Nyssa on the Personal Identity of the Savior", *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, Vol. 10, Num. 4, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, Winter 2002, p.477.
[111] Ibid; cf. Rowan A. Greer, "Man from Heaven: Paul's Last Adam and Apollinarius' Christ," pp.170-1.

Christ that His humanity is lost in the "one composite nature", which would seem to compromise the ability for our salvation if Christ did not have a true, full human nature.

In the backlash to Apollinarius' views, there was a need to more clearly define His human nature and what it encompassed – a body with a passive or active soul? – as well as the nature of the union between the divine and human in order to preserve the divinity and provide salvation for the humanity. For, in order for salvation to be achieved through Christ, his humanity had to be both unique but also theoretically achievable; that is, it had to be unique because of its unity with the divine, but achievable in theory for a human being in order to provide redemption. The concern was so strong that many were accused of being Apollinarians after his condemnation at Constantinople in 381, prompting a new attempt to provide a definition while skirting the problematic Apollinarian language. The Cappadocians – Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa – were all especially concerned with refuting the controversial implications of Apollinarianism. Basil stressed the presence of a human soul in Christ, which coincides with the fact that he considered the *nous* to be where the image of God resides. If Christ was going to provide men with redemption and salvation, then he must provide it to the whole man: "first the psyche is rendered spiritual through purification and the ascent to God [in the imitation of Christ]; then, at the resurrection, the body itself becomes like the body of Christ as death is finally defeated and corruption is swallowed up by incorruption."[112] Christ provides salvation for both the body and soul because He is Logos united to both body and soul.

One important question that arose from confirming a human soul in Christ is whether or not that soul includes a human will; and therefore whether a human will necessitates sin.[113] Many theologians strove to confirm the presence of the human soul, like the Cappadocians,

[112] Norman Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p.212

[113] Cf. Ps. Athanasius, *De Incarnatione contra Apollinarium*, 1.15; and Gregory of Nyssa, *Antirrheticus*, 1.19. The definition of the human will is an important topic well into Cassian's time as well as can be seen in his contribution to the Grace and Free Will debate.

Epiphanius, Amphilocus of Iconium, and Didymus the Blind, but the problem remained of defining the state of that soul and the relationship it had with the Logos. Didymus the Blind, in his text, *Commentary on Psalms*, defines the soul of Christ as *homoousios* with other human souls, which is susceptible only to the initial stirrings of temptation since the divine will would freely choose against sin; this is the "essential precondition of the reality and merit of the Saviour's struggle against evil".[114]

Gregory of Nazianzus pointed out that what was not assumed by the Logos could not have been restored by Him, therefore He joined to a soul, but it was a soul free from sin.[115] Gregory also explained that through the union with the *nous,* which is where the image of God resides and therefore has a natural affinity to the divine, the Logos is able to unite to the body and deify it in the Incarnation.[116] This can clearly be seen in *Orations* 39-40: "[The Logos] came to his own image and took on himself flesh for the sake of our flesh and mingled himself with an intelligent soul for my soul's sake, purifying like by like, and in all ways except sin was made human." Adam was made up of the union of the earthly and divine; therefore, Christ, as the second Adam, must be comprised of both earthly and divine. According to Gregory, since what is not assumed cannot be saved, the flesh, the will, and the nous are deified in Christ. The significance of the deification of the flesh in the Incarnation and the ability for the flesh, will, and *nous* to be deified in Christ is that this possibility for deification can be transferred to men. Christopher Beeley states:

> "Gregory argues that sin and death could be defeated and the process of divinization restarted only if God took on our condition and healed it from within. Christ is the constitutive principle of salvation precisely because he is most fundamentally the Son of God, who has assumed our fallen condition *as his own*. The unity of Christ as a single entity (*hen, heis*)—with his human existence given the fullest possible

[114] J.N.D. Kelly, *ECD,* p.301; Cf. *Commentary on Psalms* xviii, 10, 2-7; xiv, 14, 7-14
[115] cf. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Epistula* 101.7; and *Orations* 38.13
[116] cf. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations* 25.16 & 30.12; and Russell, *Deification*, p.223.

> articulation *within* his divine identity—is therefore the central tenet of Gregory's soteriology and his Christology."[117]

Through the imitation of Christ, baptism, participation in the Eucharist, and the ascetic life, men can reach salvation through the deification of Christ's flesh. Norman Russell points out that this is not a "*henôsis*, or union, but the transformation of the self expressed by the new Christian term, *theôsis*" in Gregory's ideas on deification.[118]

Moving to the youngest of the three Cappadocian Fathers, Gregory of Nyssa, it is possible to see a more reserved view on deification itself providing different nuances within his Christology. When the younger Gregory was accused of being an Apollinarian, it prompted him to write his treatise, *Against Apollinarius*, after which he was then reproached by Theophilus of Alexandria for expounding a Christology that divided the natures too much – illustrating the need to define the nature of Christ without leaning too far one way or the other.[119] While Gregory of Nyssa and Apollinarius used similar language "to speak of what is unified and what is distinct in the Savior", their respective definitions of each of those united natures are different.[120] While Gregory of Nyssa also stresses a transformation of the flesh of Christ in the Incarnation, he focuses more on the participation in the divine rather than a deification theory. Both Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus have issue not only with Apolliarius' lack of a human soul in Christ, but also "his failure to see in Christ the course and type of God's project of reshaping all of humanity together, and every human person individually, in God's image, through the inner communication of divine life to a complete and normal human being."[121] Elizabeth Agnew Cochran also shares this view that for Gregory of Nyssa, "Christ's human nature is simultaneously both the prototype for our

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[117] Christopher Beeley, "Gregory of Nazianzus on the Unity of Christ," in *In the Shadow of the Incarnation: Essays on Jesus Christ in the Early Church in honor of Brian E. Daley, S.J.*, Peter W. Martens, (ed.), Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008, p.110.
[118] Norman Russell, *Deification*, p.218.
[119] cf. Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.149 n.173.
[120] Brian Daley, "'Heavenly Man' and 'Eternal Christ': Apollinarius and Gregory of Nyssa on the Personal Identity of the Savior," p.472-3.
[121] Ibid, p.478.

own, and the end to which we are restored."[122] It is also through baptism, the Eucharist (the partaking of Christ's deified flesh), and through virginity that men are able to participate in the divine. Because men were created in God's image, and anything God made is essentially good, then humanity has the ability for good, and it is through the contemplation of God and the imitation of Christ that they can achieve it.[123] It is the *nous*, the will, and the flesh that exist in Christ's humanity, which allows for the salvation of men through the participation in the divine.

Through the Christologies outlined above, it is clear that the concerns of the debate were turning toward defining the relationship human and the divine; and therefore the nature and relationship of the soul, the will, and the flesh within humanity itself. Nevertheless, there was still a language of "mixing" natures, which was one of the things Apollinarius was condemned for.[124] While the humanity was becoming more defined, the nature of the union was still relatively undefined in this period. As seen above, Evagrius is an Origenist in his understanding of Creation, but he also develops this idea further. He stresses the connection of Christ to the Trinity through essential knowledge, but reserves consubstantiality for only the Father, Logos, and Spirit. Christ is the creator of the second material creation, allowing him to be the focus for the second natural contemplation; however, from here he can only be helper. The monk must the move on to focus on the Father, Son, and Spirit in the first natural contemplation of the first immaterial creation of the *noes*. The implications of this Christology will become clearer in Chapter Four: The Contemplative Life.

[122] Elizabeth Agnew Cochran, "The *Imago Dei* and Human Perfection: The significance of Christology for Gregory of Nyssa's understanding of the human person," *The Heythrop Journal L*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2009, p.404.
[123] Ibid, p.403-5.
[124] cf. Ibid, p.296-303; Gregory of Nazianzus uses "commingling" in his *Ep.* 101.4; Gregory of Nyssa calls the union a mystery and inexplicable, cf. *Antirrh* 21, 24; *contra Eunom.* 3.4

b. Cassian's Christological Context

Where Evagrius died by 399/400, Cassian did not begin publishing his works until about 419, and he did not publish his strictly Christological work until 429. Therefore, there are a noteworthy number of years allowing for a significant amount of influence beyond the Evagrian ideas Cassian is so often relegated to expounding. In those intervening years, there occured the expulsion of the Tall Brothers in the Origenist controversy and the attack and condemnation of John Chrysostom, through which "Cassian had learnt bitter lessons in the political and social tensions involved in ascetic claims to public attention."[125] He has a consistent Christology that he treats specifically in his third work, *On the Incarnation,* but which is also present in his first two works, the *Institutes* and the *Conferences,* making all three significant for understanding his Christology. Augustine Casiday points out that the Christological ideas in Cassian's first two works "are draw[n] together in a systematic way and, in the process, [are] develop[ed]". In addition, *On the Incarnation* "represents a natural extension of the works he had already produced."[126] However, a key factor that does distinguish the third work from the first two is the outbreak of controversy between Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius.

First it is necessary to trace the evolution of Christology since Evagrius' death in 399/400. Unlike Evagrius, Cassian's Christological treatise *is* written in order to contribute to the Cyril-Nestorius debate, and therefore when one takes into account the last of his works, *On the Incarnation,* one must take into account the existing state in the evolution of the Christological debate.[127] After the Synod at Alexandria in 362 and the condemnation of Apollinarius in 381, there is another side to the attempts to rectify the Christological issue

[125] Conrad Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great*, p.36
[126] Augustine Casiday, *Tradition and Theology in St John Cassian*, p.252-3.
[127] That is not to say that this is the only work important for Cassian's Christology. In fact, all three works will be taken into account, but it is important that while the first two were written in order to inform the monks of Gaul on correct monastic rules and theology, the third was written at the behest of Leo in order to contribute to a different discussion.

beside the Cappadocians and those mentioned above. Views associated with Antioch and Diodore of Tarsus, like Theodore of Mopsuestia and later Nestorius, attempt this issue in a different fashion than those who influenced Evagrius.

They felt the need to ensure the connection between Christological philosophy and the historical Jesus Christ portrayed in the Gospels, while also staunchly preserving the impassibility of God. Diodore taught the importance of "the plain sense of Scripture, and its commitment to preserving the text's underlying unity and logical coherence" while also allowing for allegorical interpretation when necessary.[128] This exegetical theory affects both John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia, both students of Diodore, but the former does not have a consistent Christology with his fellow student and teacher. While "Chrysostom's Christology is more unitive and locates the personal subject of Christ with the Logos, and thus he is much closer to Cyril than Theodore,"[129] his fellow student considered "Christ's divine nature [to] remain impenetrable to and totally unaffected by the experiences of the incarnation."[130] For Chrysostom, it was precisely through the Son of God becoming "our brother by grace" that allows humanity to be adopted into sonship of God by grace – an idea that necessitates the Son of God as the personal subject of Christ in every experience.[131] In order to work through the problem of the divine suffering in the human life, in the *Homilies on Lazarus* 1, Chrysostom qualifies Christ's experiences: "As man I was tempted by the devil, but as God, I cast out demons. As man, I am about to suffer on behalf of people." Through which, Fairbairn points out, "Chrysostom is able to ascribe all the actions and

[128] Susan Wessell, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy: the making of a saint and a heretic,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp.250-1
[129] Donald Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church,* p.210
[130] Paul L. Gavrilyuk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God: the dialectics of Patristic thought*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, p.143.
[131] Donald Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church,* p.208.

experiences of Christ's human life to the Logos, while still insisting that the Logos did not change in his own nature."[132]

However, Diodore, Theodore, and Nestorius felt it necessary to protect the impassibility of God by stating that Christ's divine nature could not have fully participated in the human suffering of Christ.[133] Theodore considered Christ to have a human soul, but unlike Diodore, he thought "the Lord's created soul [to have] real significance [...], it was the principle of life and activity in Him, and equally of the saving acts which secure our redemption. [It was] divine grace that kept Christ's mind and will immune from sin."[134] It is this importance of divine grace that Donald Fairbairn considers to be the driving force in Theodore and Nestorius' christologies. It is "an idea driven by the belief that God gives people those gifts (power, aid, and cooperation) that they will need in order to advance from the age of mortality to that of [human] perfection."[135] Fairbairn stresses that the salvation provided in Christ is not an "elevation to *divine* life…rather…progress towards perfect *human* life" which follows along their need to firmly distinguish the divine from the created.[136]

Soon after Nestorius was appointed Bishop of Constantinople in 428, he offended the beliefs of Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria, in an attempt to stress the distinction of natures by saying that it is wrong to call Mary *theotokos* (mother of God), and that she should rather be called *theodochos* (recipient of God) or *Christotokos* (mother of Christ). Nestorius is stressing the importance of the distinction between the human and divine parts of Christ. Although he considered the union to bring about the single *prosopon*, person, of Christ, his critics deemed him as expounding a doctrine of "two sons" and to fall short in explaining the

[132] Ibid, p.210.
[133] Ibid, p.141.
[134] J.N.D. Kelly, *ECD,* p. 304.
[135] Donald Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church,* p.28.
[136] Ibid.

metaphysical structure that would back up his ideas on the union.[137] Therefore, Nestorius, seeming to divide the person of Christ too much for Cyril, was quickly attacked for his views. Susan Wessell deems not just Cyril and Nestorius' respective ideas but also their styles of expressing those ideas important in this debate. When Nestorius compares Cyril to Arius, Apollinarius, and Eunomius, "instead of making Cyril their direct heir—as Cyril himself did to Nestorius—he mentioned their names simply to introduce his Christological concerns over the designation *Theotokos* for Mary."[138] Cyril, on the other hand, uses shorter, more forward declarations, "repeating statements containing striking images." Wessell gives the example: "'If Mary is not *Theotokos*,' said Cyril to his quarrelling monks, 'then Jesus is not God.' Nothing could strike more directly the soteriological foundations of Christian piety than this straightforward sentence encapsulating the entirety of the Trinitarian concerns debated at Nicaea."[139]

For Cyril, his vehemence against Nestorius dividing the natures of Christ the way he does is based on his understanding of the Logos as the personal subject of Christ – similar to Chrysostom.[140] It is necessary that the Logos was so united to the humanity that it is possible to say the Logos suffered because it is through this involvement in human suffering that salvation is possible. For Cyril, it is "the voluntary self-emptying of a single divine subject who accepted the limitations of human life" that makes the incarnation "unique and absolutely unparalleled."[141] Through interpreting Phil 2:5-11, Cyril makes it clear that humanity is already empty, and "only the one in whom the fullness of God dwelt could become empty, only the one who was rich was in a position to give up his riches for the sake

[137] Ibid, p.316-7.
[138] Susan Wessell, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, p.245.
[139] Ibid, p.245-6.
[140] Interestingly, Fairbairn notices that although Chrysostom uses similar language to Athanasius and Cyril, there is no "significant link" between him and the Alexandrians; cf. *Grace and Christology in the Early Church*, p.211.
[141] Paul Gavrilruk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God*, p.141 & p.151, respectively.

of others."[142] However, Cyril's understanding also drew negative criticism from Nestorius, who accused him of *theopatheia*, which is precisely the implication that Nestorius so vehemently works against.[143]

Interestingly, of the two, Nestorius' style is the clearer and more methodical, whereas Cyril's is "less coherent"[144]; however, as pointed out above with the views of Susan Wessell, Cyril was the better rhetorician. While Nestorius tried to "address his adversaries as though conscientious instruction would resolve for them the confusion besetting the churches," Cyril used more emphatic and striking language in order to condemn the views of his enemy.[145] Through this tactic, he was able quickly to gain the support of the Roman churches against him. Therefore a council was called at Ephesus in 431, and Nestorius was sent into exile and the doctrine of the "two sons" was condemned as heretical. The supporters of the two sides of the debate attempted to settle their differences with the Formula of Reunion in 433, where *theotokos* was agreed on as appropriate, as well as speaking about Christ as having "two natures", with both sides agreeing that there remained a distinction between natures, but not a separation. The debate continued, however, prompting Leo to publish his *Tome*, in which he again affirmed that Christ was one person in two natures. Because of the continuing uncertainty of how to talk of the person of Christ, the Council of Chalcedon in 451 settled the terminology as well as the appropriate (and inappropriate) works to consult concerning the person of Christ.[146]

However, all of this occurred after Cassian's publishing of the *On the Incarnation*. It is important to note that the debate continued for some time, and Pope Leo, who was the one who asked Cassian to write the treatise against Nestorius (although before he was Pope),

[142] Ibid, p. 153.
[143] Ibid, p. 144.
[144] Ibid, p.171.
[145] Susan Wessell, *Cyril of Alexandria and the Nestorian Controversy*, p.248; also cf. Ibid, p.189; 245-248.
[146] Richard Norris, *The Christological Controversy*, p.28-31. The Council of Chalcedon seemed to settle things in the West, but in certain parts of the Eastern church the debate raged on for some time.

remains prominent in the debate. This shows that Leo considered Cassian's previously published works and his ideas to coincide with his own, as well as considering Cassian himself distinguished enough to weigh in on the debate when the Roman churches were called in to support Cyril. Although it is extremely important that the last of Cassian's works is in specific reference to Nestorius, it also coincides with the ideas already expressed in the *Institutes* and the *Conferences*. Therefore, his Christology was already in development before he had to position himself against a particular idea.

Each of the controversies described above have a consistent impact on Cassian's theology. Throughout each one, we have seen issues regarding the relationship between body and soul, and between created and Creator, as well as the nature of sin and its effect on these two relationship, especially. The level of detail given to the Christological controversy is necessary since it is a long and slow evolution of idea and technical language. Cassian's understanding of Creation and Christology are both vitally affected by these theological debates and controversies. They shape his the theology underpinning his asceticism in such a fundamental way, that it drastically changes his asceticism from that of Evagrius.

Intro.3: Context and Scholarship

In the study of Cassian's works, it is necessary to understand the context and community in which he envisioned his works being involved in. Goodrich points out that he portrays himself as "nothing more than an experienced monk passing on an ancient system".[147] Experience has a large influence in what we find in Cassian's works. While on the surface he gives us his "experience" of Egypt and the monastic communities there, there is no question that his experiences between Egypt and Gaul affect and shape his texts. Nevertheless, we know very little for certain about Cassian the person, other than he most

[147] Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian*, p.150.

likely was in certain places at certain times (Egypt, Constantinople, and Rome) – even his presence in Marseilles is heavily and quite persuasively questioned by Goodrich at the end of his book.[148] Cassian provides modern scholars with a very dynamic case study because all we really have for certain are his three works.[149] Therefore, he is often situated in modern scholarship amongst Origenist studies (Origen, Evagrius, and the controversy) or studies on the grace and free will debate (Prosper, Augustine, and Pelagius). Cassian provides modern scholarship with three texts not closely tied to a biography, but which touch on and at some level engage with all the intricate and evolving controversies going on at this time. They are therefore shaped by much more than one major influence. It is necessary to engage with Cassian's texts while keeping his nearly non-existent biography in mind – which may sound contradictory, but because there is very little available to the modern scholar, it is necessary to remain open and aware of different possibilities concerning his connections and influences.

Despite this complex context, his dependence on Evagrius is mentioned in almost every modern source concerning Cassian since the publication of Marsili's work in 1936. It is possible that this may be because Evagrius is one of the best sources for Egyptian monasticism of this time, and has many extant works. Therefore the question must be how much is a specifically Evagrian influence and how much is derived from their mutual presence in the same community. Finding a definite answer to this question may be impossible, but considering the question allows for new insight into Cassian as a writer, theologian, and monk. Therefore this present study on the relationship between his works and those of Evagrius works toward providing a different perspective on how to understand Cassian and his works as they are shaped by the theological, cultural, and even political experiences between the late 390s when Cassian was in Egypt and the 420s when he is

[148] Cf. Ibid, Appendix 1, pp.211-234.
[149] Even "John Cassian" the Latin monk writing in Gaul has been questioned by Panayiotis Tzamalikos although I am more convinced by Goodrich in Cassian's Gallic context than Tzamalikos' suggestion that the works were actually written by a Greek monk a century later and the Latin monk, "John Cassian", never existed.

writing in Gaul. This work will focus closely on the relationship between the texts of the two authors, while also suggesting other connections, in order to provide a foundation of which scholarship can launch a new approach to Cassian as a known student of Evagrius (but not a "mere translator" of him).[150]

Not only are their different time periods important for understanding the relationship between the two monks, but also their respective audiences. Here it becomes vital that while Cassian has three known and extant works, two of which are devoted to instructing monks on the monastic life (*Institutes* and *Conferences*), and the third being doctrinal (*On the Incarnation*), Evagrius has a wide variety of works including letters, exegesis, philosophical and theological works, and those dedicated to monastic instruction as well. Cassian is writing a handbook or rule for a community, whereas Evagrius is giving monastic advice rather than a rule. Steven Driver points out that "Cassian intended his monastic *corpus* to be read by a narrowly defined audience within a limited set of circumstances".[151] Richard Goodrich sets out these circumstances very clearly in his book, *Contextualizing Cassian*.

This thesis endeavours to bring together the changing scholarly conversation concerning Cassian and Evagrius into a central text in order to allow the conversation to continue to flourish and flow. Its changed nature necessitates a reference other than Dom Marsili's book from 1936 for this relationship. This thesis also endeavours to add to that conversation by suggesting that Cassian is significantly affected by the theological atmosphere of the early fifth century in his appropriation of and diversion from Evagrius. Cassian places the Evagrian framework of asceticism onto a divergent theology; therefore, the scholarly conversation must now qualify how we refer to his Evagrian influence in order give the fullest opportunity for understanding the works of John Cassian.

[150] Many modern works will often explain Evagrius' ideas at the beginning of a section on Cassian, which may cause the reader to draw incorrect conclusions concerning Cassian's own works. cf. Paul Patterson, *Visions of Christ,* pp.38-51; Owen Chadwick, *John Cassian*, esp. pp.85-98; Pierre Courcelle, *Late Latin Writers*, esp. pp.229-231; Marylin Dunn, *The Emergence of Monasticism*; pp.73-75, to name a few examples.
[151] Steven Driver, *Reading of Egyptian Monastic Culture*, p.4.

Chapter I: The Practical Life

I.1: Introduction

Cassian follows the Evagrian organization of the ascetic life into the practical and contemplative life. Furthermore, Cassian also considers the relationship between the inner and outer man to be of high importance. For it is these two that must be focused on and purified in harmony with each other for salvation. Therefore, it is necessary to lay out Cassian's rules and institutes for the outer man in the practical life and his relationship to Evagrius, in order to lay the foundation for his understanding of the vices, the spiritual battle, and the contemplative life. Without understanding the physical acts, space, and limitations that foster the contemplative life, it would be difficult to understand fully the expectations of the inner man in the ascetic life.

One of the most important aspects for understanding Cassian's presentation of the practical life is his context and audience. Cassian is specifically writing to provide a consistent—and correct, according to him—set of rules for the monks of Gaul. Among the monasteries of this region, Cassian is appalled at the lack of consistency and understanding of what the ascetic life requires.[152] He prefers what he considers to be the ancient and established rules of the Egyptian monks, which he endeavours to pass on through his *Institutes*. Not only is his context and audience vital for understanding his presentation of the Practical life, but also his specific explanation and understanding of it.

Therefore, this chapter will consider different aspects of the Practical life as they are presented by Cassian in his works: dress, psalmody, entering the cenobium, Abba and obedience, and finally renunciation. The presentation of the monastic dress found in *Institutes*

[152] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 2.2

Book One, is clearly influenced by Evagrius; however, on closer inspection, it is becomes clear that while the frame is certainly Evagrian, the content of that frame is decidedly Cassian. Therefore, an extended and in-depth discussion of the Cassian's understanding of the monastic dress in relation to Evagrius as well as Basil, Jerome, Pachomius, and Orsiesius is necessary in order to clarify the Evagrian influence within this subsection of the practical life. Then the chapter will turn to psalmody, which Cassian gives much more detail than Evagrius. This is true for many aspects of the ascetic life because Cassian was writing a rule, whereas many of Evagrius' writing concerning monastic practices are to give advice or answer questions from his friends. Following from this will be another aspect that is found in Cassian, but not in Evagrius, which is the process of entering the cenobium. This is vital for understanding the foundations of the ascetic life through understanding the long and difficult process of proving oneself for acceptance into the cenobium. It provides additional support to the claim that Cassian is not merely transmitting Evagrian asceticism by showing the level of detail that he himself explains.

Then the chapter will turn to the relationship between the Abba and the monk as well as the importance of obedience to the Abba. While Evagrius does reference this idea, mainly in *To Eulogios*, he does not place nearly the same importance and centrality on it as does Cassian. For Cassian, this relationship is the foundation for the purpose of the ascetic life. The subjection of one's own will and judgment to the Abba allows one to prepare for the subjection of the human will to the divine will. These first four of these aspects of the practical life—dress, psalmody, entering the cenobium, and obedience to the Abba—are all presented in the first four books of the *Institutes*. The close discussion of these aspects not only provides insight into Cassian's own abilities as a monastic thinker, but also provides

insight into a comparison too often made—between the *Institutes* and the *Praktikos*.[153] The *Institutes* actually contains much more than the *Praktikos,* though the similarities do come out in the presentation of the vices; however, relating it specifically to the *Praktikos* is inaccurate and does justice to neither the *Institutes* nor the *Prakitkos*.

The fifth and final aspect to be dealt with in this chapter on the Practical Life is renunciation. It has three parts, the first two of which relate specifically to the physical practices and attributes of the cenobium. The third is explained fully in the *Conferences* and is placed more in the contemplative part of asceticism, however, it provides an excellent concluding section to this chapter as, for Cassian, while the practical leads to the contemplative, the contemplative cannot function properly without the ongoing ascetic practices.

I.2: Dress

It is necessary to begin with the monastic dress for two very important reasons. First, Cassian himself begins with it, dedicating the first book of the *Institutes* entirely to the monastic habit and its spiritual meanings. This primacy of position is "quite rare in the previous tradition".[154] Second, it is one of the shared aspects with Evagrius that is often blankly stated by modern scholars as being a fully direct influence.[155] It cannot be denied that there is a connection since Evagrius' explanation of dress comprises the prologue of the *Praktikos,* the work most commonly referred to as the model for the *Institutes,* and the scheme of pieces and giving a spiritual meaning for each are structured similarly.[156] William Harmless, at least, states that

[153] Cf. Catherine Chin, "Cassian, Cognition, and the Common Life", in *Ascetic Culture: Essays in Honor of Philip Rousseau*, Blake Leyerle and Robin Darling Young, (eds.), University of Notre Dame Press, 2013, p.155
[154] Ibid, p.152
[155] cf. Marsili, p.87-8; Goodrich, p.120; Harmless, p.380; Weber, p.70, though Weber does point out that with the *analabos*, Evagrius may be the inspiration, but not a literal dependence, cf. p.7, n.103
[156] I have questioned this notion in the Introduction though it is difficult to draw any clear conclusions regarding Cassian's relationship to the Evagrian textual versus oral tradition.

Cassian's account "parallels" Evagrius' rather than flatly stating Evagrius as a source alongside Basil, like Goodrich. Harmless then provides the two monks' interpretations side by side allowing the reader to make up his own mind concerning this issue. However, in this particular study, a close and detailed exposition into the true nature of the relationship of Cassian's understanding of the monastic habit and its spiritual meanings to that found in Evagrius is a necessity, as it is often those areas that seem the most similar that Cassian's shift in purpose, audience, and definitions can be found.

Adalbert de Vogüé has written an excellent and methodical work on the sources of the first four books of the *Institutes*, including a detailed analysis of Cassian's presentation and interpretation of the monastic garb. He identifies Evagrius and Basil as the two main influences on Cassian's deliberation over the habit.[157] Cassian's presentation of the monastic garb is the subject of book one and he lays it out in this order: the belt, clothes are a covering only, the hood (*koukoullion*), linen tunic with short sleeves (*colobium*), ropes (*analaboi*), short cape (*mafortes*), goatskin (*melotis*/*pera*), staff, sandals or no shoes, and the belt again. The first two and last two are dealt with by Basil and those in the middle by Evagrius. However, before delving into the specific relationship of Cassian to Basil and Evagrius, it is necessary to first understand his relationship to contemporary Egyptian literature concerning the monastic habit. The table below shows the pieces of clothing mentioned in six authors: Basil, Cassian, Evagrius, Jerome, Pachomius, and Orsiesius.

[157] Adalbert de Vogüé, "Les sources des quatre premiers livres des Institutions de Jean Cassien: Introduction aux recherché sur les anciennes règles monastiques latines", *Studia monastic* 27, 1985, pp. 241-311; also cf. Goodrich, p.120 and Harmless, p.380 for his sources of Basil and Evagrius.

Table 1: The Egyptian habit in six authors

Clothing	**Basil**	**Cassian**	**Evagrius**	**Jerome, *Praefatio*[158]**	**Pachomius[159]**	**Orsiesius[160]**
Belt	*Zona* or *cingulo*	*Zona* or *cingulo*	ζώνη	*Balteolo lineo*	*zona*	*Zonam lineam*
Hood		*cucullis*	κουκούλλιον	*Cucullis duobus*	*Cucullis duobus*	*Duos cucullos*
Tunic		*Colobiis lineis*	γεγυμνῶσθαι τὰς χεῖρας	*Duo lebitonaria*[161]	*Levitonariis duobus*	*Duo lebitonaria*
Rope		*Resticulas* or ἀναλάβους	ἀνάλαβος			
Coat		*Angusto palliolo; mafortes*		*Amictu lineo*	*Sabano longiore*	*Palliolum lineum*
Goatskin[162]		*Pellis caprina*, called *Melotis* or *pera*	μηλωτὴν	*Meloten*	*Pellicula quae pendet ex latere*	*pellem*
Staff		*baculus*	ῥάβδος	*bacillo*	*bacello*	*virgam*
Shoes	*calciamentis*	*Calciamenta* (shoes) or *gallicis* (sandals)		*Gallicis*	*gallicis*	*gallicas*

In Table 1, it is clear that the only article of the habit that is unique to Cassian and Evagrius in this Table is the rope, or *analabos*. Also, Cassian has connections to other authors in items not mentioned by Evagrius – the coat is also mentioned by Jerome and Orsiesius, and shoes are mentioned by Jerome, Pachomius, and Orsiesius. However, Cassian and Evagrius are both concerned with more than just detailing the habit. For them it is also necessary to express the symbolism and meaning of each item. Nevertheless, while the order of items is the most similar, and there are small similarities in meaning for the belt, having one's hands free for work, the rope (for work), and the staff (reminder of reliance on the Lord), the only one with a significant similarity is the goatskin, which both monks relate to the death of the vices and living in virtue or goodness. There are also overall themes that are similar – mortification, poverty, and work – but when looking closely at the details Cassian gives

[158] Cf. Jerome, *Praef*. 4; the order Jerome gives is two sleeveless tunics (*lebintonaria*), linen coat, two hoods, goatskin, belt, shoes, and staff.
[159] Cf. Pachomius, *Regula, praecepta* 81; the order given is two *lebitonaria*, a long cloth (*sabanum*) that goes around the neck and shoulders, the hide, shoes, two hoods, belt, and staff.
[160] Cf. Orsiesius, *Liber* 22; the order given is two *lebitonaria*, linen coat, two hoods, linen belt, shoes, goatskin, and staff.
[161] The *lebitonarium* was a sleeveless tunic like Cassian's *colobia.*
[162] The melote is also found in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, though without explicit explanation; cf. Arsenius 32, Bessarion 4, John the Cenobite 1, Mark 4, Motius 2, Poemon 44, An Abba of Rome 2, Silvanus 8, Phocas 1

concerning the habit and its meaning, it is clear that there is quite a bit more going on than the influences of Basil and Evagrius. Even the passages with Basilian influence are more clearly dependent than those with Evagrian influence.

Therefore, it is necessary to detail the relationship in meaning, not only for the connection between Cassian and Evagrius' works, but also in how modern scholarship understands their relationship on this issue. One of the most important influences on each author's portrayal of the monastic clothing is his audience. Cassian and Evagrius wrote for a specifically monastic audience, whereas Basil wrote for a more general Christian audience. Furthermore, Cassian's monastic audience is made up of Latin speaking Gallic monks whom he is trying to educate in the proper Egyptian rules of monasticism. He also is more focused on an asceticism that functions within a community – an emphasis that is not found in Evagrius. The clothing allows the monk to be aesthetically separate from the world, but also aesthetically the same as his brothers. Basil explains that it is appropriate that the Christian have a garment appropriate to his order, as a soldier or a senator does[163] While for Evagrius and Cassian, the clothing designates the monk, Basil is thinking of a more general, Christian audience.[164]

Evagrius introduces his explanation of the habit by answering Anatolius' demand that "I explain to you the symbolic habit of the Egyptian monks – for you believe it to be neither accidental nor superfluous that it is so different from what other people – I will therefore tell you what we have learned concerning this from the holy fathers."[165] Not only does Evagrius point out that he is explaining the habit of the monk, but very specifically of the Egyptian monk which is "so different from what other people wear". He also states that he will gives the symbolism behind each piece according to what has learned from the holy fathers – giving the impression that these may not be Evagrius' own interpretations, but part of the

[163] Cf. Basil, *Regula* 11.18
[164] Cf. de Vogüé, "Les sources", p.252
[165] Evagrius, *Praktikostikos prol.* 1

understanding common within the community. The importance of clothing and its symbolism is also revealed in Palladius' biography of Evagrius. After Evagrius leaves Constantinople and goes to Jerusalem, he is "filled with uncertainty and in a dilemma" and he "chang[es] his clothes and his manner of speech—he was intoxicated with vainglory." Evagrius then falls into a sickness which the doctor cannot do anything about, but after Melania the Elder realizes it is a spiritual sickness, Evagrius promises her that he will take to the monastic life. "He got up, was clothed in the monastic clothing at her hands, and he set out abroad to the mountain of Nitria, which is in Egypt."[166] It is clear here by Evagrius' change of clothes that they are outer symbols of the inner man – he changes clothes when he has a crisis of faith and falls into vice; he then changes his clothes again when he is healed of his spiritual sickness and takes to the desert to get away from the temptations of the cities.

Cassian is also writing concerning the habit of the monk, not the general Christian. However, he uses the physical and symbolic elements of the monastic habit to establish two doctrinal concerns: to "locate the origins of monastic life and clothing in scripture [and...] to present a clear picture of the monk's character."[167] Cassian demonstrates this focus from the very beginning. In only the fourth sentence into the first book of his *Institutes*, he states: "For the authority of Holy Scripture makes it clear that those who in the Old Testament were responsible for the beginnings of this profession—namely, Elijah and Elisha—went about dressed in this way." Cassian then goes on to state the New Testament examples of John, Peter and Paul "and other men of the same calibre". He explains that Elijah "manifested the flower of virginity and examples of chastity and continence" and it was "from his clothing [that] the king at once pictured the man of God."[168] Clothing was an important symbol for

[166] Palladius, *The Lausiac History* 86 (*PL* 1183D)
[167] Lauren Pristas, *The Theological Anthropology of John Cassian,* Ph.D. Dissertation: Boston College, *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses,* 1993, p.21
[168] Cassian, *Inst*. 1.1.3; cf. 2 Kgs 1:8; for more on the significance of Elijah as the archetype for the Egyptian monastic uniform, cf. Rebecca Krawiec, "'Garments of salvation': representations of monastic clothing in later antiquity", *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17.1, 2009, pp.134-136

the monk – it not only separated him from the world, but it also brought him into communion with his fellow brothers. "Monastic dress—like the monastic body itself—bring to the fore the paradox between trancendant perfection and material imperfection in the monastic life. Monks are like angels, yet human; they were to be beautiful as a result of their vocation, yet drab in dress".[169] The clothing is contradictory in nature just as the monks themselves were since they were both a part of the world and separate from it.

While the monastic clothing stands as a physical symbol of the monastic life, Cassian and Evagrius also consider each item to stand as a spiritual symbol as well. However, this is one of the points on which de Vogüé faults Cassian in his appropriation of Evagrius' enumeration of the pieces of the habit. He asserts that Cassian did not understand that Evagrius was connecting each piece with a particular vice. Evagrius explains that the hood is a reminder of the monk's "child-like relationship with Christ" which "produce[s] humility and uproot[s] the primordial vice of pride."[170] Having one's hands free aid in the fight against Vainglory because it "manifests the absence of hypocrisy in their way of life."[171] The *analabos* takes on the form of the cross symbolizing the faith in Christ and allows unimpeded work, which aids against anger and acedia, respectively.[172] The belt guards against fornication, the *melote* reminds the monk of the love of poverty avoiding avarice, and the staff represents the "tree of life" which references gluttony.[173] However, as this detailed comparison will show, this judgment by de Vogüé takes into account neither Cassian's full purpose in his explanation, or its relevance within his systematic portrayal of the ascetic life.

In order to elucidate the relationship between Cassian and his sources, Basil and Evagrius, the table below organizes Cassian's order of the monastic habit against the aspects

[169] Rebecca Krawiec, "'Garments of Salvation': representations of monastic cothing in late antiquity", *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17.1, 2009, p.126.
[170] Evagrius, *Praktikostikos prol.* 2
[171] Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 3
[172] Cf. Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 4; cf. de Vogüé, p.250, 258.
[173] Belt, cf. Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 5, and de Vogüé p.250; *melote*, cf. Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 6, and de Vogüé, p.250, 259; and Staff, cf. Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 7, and de Vogüé, p.251, 260

found in Basil and Evagrius, including the use of Scripture and Evagrius' connections with the vices.

Table 2: Monastic Clothing in Cassian, Basil, and Evagrius

Clothing	**Cassian**	**Basil**	**Evagrius**
Belt	*Inst*. 1.1 2 Kgs 1:8; Mt 3:4; Acts 12:8, 21:11	*Reg*. 11.32-6 Mt 3:4; Mk 1:6; 2 Kgs 1:8; Acts 12:8, 21:11; Job 38:3, 49:2	
Garment	*Inst.* 1.2 1 Tim 6:8 Covering of nakedness not a vestment	*Reg.* 11.1-31 Mk 9:35; 1 Cor 11:22; 1 Cor 11:22; Gn 3:21 Covering not vestment	
Hood (*koukoullion*)	*Inst.* 1.3 Ps 130:1-2		*Prak prol* 2 Ps 126:1; Is 14:12 Humility vs. pride
Short-sleeved Linen tunic (*colobia*)	*Inst.* 1.4 Col 3:3, 3:5; Gal 2:20, 6:14		Short sleeves: *Prak prol* 3 Jn 5:44 Sincerity vs vainglory
Scapular (*analabos*)	*Inst.* 1.5 Acts 20:34; 2 Thes 3:8, 3:10		*Prak prol* 4 Ps 146:6 Faith of Christ vs anger Work vs acedia
Short cape (*mafortes*)	*Inst.* 1.6		
Goatskin (*melotes/pera*)	*Inst.* 1.7 Heb 11:37-8		*Prak prol* 6 2 Cor 4:10 Poverty vs avarice
Staff	*Inst.* 1.8 2 Kgs 4:29; Ps 73:19 LXX		*Prak prol* 7 Prov 3:18 Tree of life vs gluttony
Shoes	*Inst.* 1.9 Mt 10:10; Ps 61:5; Jer 17:16 LXX; Rom 13:14; Mk 3:9; Ex 3:5; Jos 5:15	*Reg.* 11.31	
Belt	*Inst.* 1.11 Lk 12:35; Col 3:5; Ps 118:83; 2 Cor 4:10	*Reg.* 11.37-8 2 Tim 2:21	*Prak prol* 5 1 Cor 7:1 Chastity vs lust

Based on this table, it is possible to see the connections of those garments mentioned in Cassian to those mentioned in Basil and Evagrius. The influence from Basil is more readily seen in this table through the common uses of Scripture for the belt (in *Inst* 1.1) and the explanation of the garment as a covering. Scripturally, there is only one connection between Cassian and Evagrius – 2 Cor 4:10; however, Cassian uses it when he returns to the belt in *Inst.* 1.11, and Evagrius uses it in his explanation of the goatskin.

As can be seen by the table above, Cassian uses all the passages from Scripture as Basil uses for his first description of the belt (Mt 3:4; Mk 1:6; 2 Kgs 1:8; Acts 12:8, 21:11), except those from Job. Both writers show the presence of the belt in the Old and New Testament, and Cassian's omission of Job is due to the fact that Job was married and therefore doesn't fit with his plan of showing the founders of the monastic profession to his monastic audience.[174] Basil is relating the clothing of the Christian, and he uses his biblical quotations and examples in a random order (John the Baptist, Elijah, Peter, Paul, Job, and the disciples). Cassian, however, is speaking of the clothing of a monk, and organizes his biblical examples from Old Testament to New Testament (Elijah, Elisha, John the Baptist, Peter and Paul). Cassian adds Elisha – a figure he uses again in his explanation of the staff – and omits Job. Cassian's deliberate use of the Basilian influence is also reflected in Goodrich's statement concerning Elijah: "Where Basil had simply offered Elijah as an example of an important figure who girded his loins, Cassian forged an explicit connection between the early prophets and the later monks."[175] While Cassian is primarily concerned with establishing this connection in *Inst.* 1.1, he also does connect it to chastity in his description of Elijah as one who "manifested the flower of virginity and examples of chastity and continence."

He returns to the belt in *Inst.* 1.11 where he explains that it has two purposes: so that the monk may work unimpeded, and that he may be remindeds of the Apostolic command for chastity in Col 3:5. These two reasons connect to both Cassian's predecessors. Basil also points out that wearing the belt "appears to be a sign of a certain virtue and readiness for work,"[176] and Evagrius directly relates the belt to chastity against fornication, but uses 1 Cor 7:1 in order to support his interpretation.[177] De Vogüé argues for a further connection

[174] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p251.
[175] Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian*, p.128.
[176] Basil, *Reg.* 11.36
[177] Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 5

between Cassian and Evagrius in this section with the use of 2 Cor 4:10: "always carrying about the death of Jesus in our body (*mortificationem Iesu in corpore nostro circumferentes)* so that the life of Jesus is manifested in our bodies." Cassian alludes to this by saying: "For girding his loins and encircling himself with dead skin [leather belt and goatskin] means that he is bearing about the mortification of his members (*mortificationem circumferre membrorum*)".[178] Evagrius uses 2 Cor 4:10 in his explanation of the *melotes*: "They wear the sheepskin – those always carrying around in their bodies the death of Jesus and muzzling all the irrational passions of the body, cutting back the wickedness of the body by their communion in good; and loving poverty but fleeing from avarice as the mother of idolatry."[179] Evagrius does use 2 Cor 4:10, which he says lessens the irrational passions, but in particular he points out that this practice is an expression of "loving poverty" and "fleeing from avarice". Whereas, Cassian explains that circling oneself in dead skin "means that he is bearing about the mortification of his members, which contain the seeds of wantonness and lasciviousness," which brings understanding to "Let your loins be girt" (Lk 12:35) and "Put to death your members here on earth—fornication, impurity, wantonness, evil desire" (Col 3:5). While Evagrius connects 2 Cor 4:10 and the mortification of Jesus to poverty against avarice in wearing the *melotes*, Cassian uses 2 Cor 4:10 and the mortification to bolster chastity against fornication and wantonness. Therefore, while there is a connection in using 2 Cor 4:10 in connecting the wearing of dead skin—whether in the belt or the goatskin—to the mortification of Jesus, their interpretations of the mortification are different. One is to be reminded of the poverty of Jesus, and the other is to be reminded of the chastity inherent in his body.[180]

[178] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p.266.
[179] Evagrius, *Praktikos Prol* 6
[180] See Chapter Four for Cassian's Christology for a discussion on the absence of Lust in the body of Jesus Christ.

After introducing the belt in the first section of Book One, Cassian then moves on to explain that "a monk's garment should only be such that it covers the body, countering the shame of nakedness, and prevents cold from doing harm, not such that it nurtures seeds of vanity (*vanitatis*) and pride (*elationis*)."[181] He goes on to quote 1 Tim 6:8: "Having food and covering (*operimenta*), let them be satisfied with these", after which he explains that "covering" is translated into Latin incorrectly in some editions, using "vesture" (*vestimenta*).[182] Basil also uses 1 Tim 6:8 and states that clothing is only a covering and not something for "ornament and decoration", which were introduced later through human contrivance, whereas clothing itself was first used after the Fall from Paradise when "'God made for' the first human beings 'tunics of skins' (Gen 3:21). For the use of such clothing was sufficient for the covering of their modesty."[183] Therefore, it can clearly be seen that Basil had at least a literary influence on Cassian's ideas in this section.

While Evagrius does not mention this idea in the prologue to *Praktikos*, he does say something concerning the pitfalls of vanity in clothing in *To Eulogios* 23.24: "Do not dress yourself in the finest clothes lest you quite blatantly put on the demon of vainglory." However, for Cassian, if a monk has truly entered the monastic life, then he has assumed the common clothing of the community and, in fact, not wearing this clothing is a mark of shame since a monk is stripped of "garb of the monastery" for committing "the sin of complaining or is guilty of an act of disobedience, however slight, [...] and, dressed once more in what he used to wear [...] he is driven out with shame and notoriety in the presence of all the brothers."[184] According to Cassian's monastic rules, a monk not wearing the proper clothes of

[181] Cassian, *Inst.* 1.2.1
[182] Concerning Cassian's admonition of using *vestimenta:* de Vogüé points out that in Rufinus' Latin translation of Basil's Rules, he uses *vestitum* and Cassian even uses *vestimenta* in *Inst.* 7.11 and 7.29; cf. De Vogüé, "Les Sources", p.253.
[183] Basil, *Reg*. 11.12
[184] Cassian, *Inst*. 4.6

the community has failed and is driven out, giving no possibility for fine clothes to cause vainglory.[185]

Next Cassian turns to the hood, or *koukoullion,* which is a distinctive piece of the Egyptian garb. The hood is a small hood that only covers the head and extends to the neck and shoulders. Cassian says that it is not so much for the "well-being of the body as [...] the regulation of behaviour."[186] It is to remind the monk of the "innocence and simplicity of small children", which, with the support of Ps 130:1-2, Cassian makes clear is an actual imitation of the humility found in the innocence and simplicity of children. Evagrius also mentions the hood, saying that it "is a symbol of the grace of our Saviour [and] God: it shelters their mind and nurses their childlike relationship with Christ", which produces humility against pride.[187] De Vogüé points out that Evagrius considers "childhood to be a state of weakness and imperfection", but it is a secondary focus for Evagrius.[188] It symbolizes the childlike imperfection in knowledge and reason as well as giving protection through grace.[189] It is the importance of the grace of God and Christ that is the essential symbolism of the hood for Evagrius. It reminds the monk that he is like a child – helpless and ignorant without grace, which then breeds humility against the "primordial vice of pride that cast Lucifer the day-star down to the earth".[190] Lucifer is the ultimate example of turning away from the grace of God; therefore the hood reminds the monk not to be like him.

Cassian's understanding of the hood representing childhood innocence and simplicity is also connected to Mt 18:1-4 showing Cassian's positive understanding of childhood.[191] However, de Vogüé faults Cassian here using this difference in Evagrius and Cassian to show

[185] Another important point is that Cassian's Vainglory has a monastic definition. It is that which puffs up a monk above other monks, like ascetic works or being ordained; therefore, a monk would not use something so outside the realm of an excellent monk and could not be puffed up by Vainglory because of it. More on the vices in Chapter 2.
[186] Cassian, *Inst.* 1.3
[187] Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 2.
[188] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p.254.
[189] Ibid, p.255.
[190] Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 2.
[191] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p.254.

how Cassian's understanding takes away from the importance of humility in the Evagrian schema, which shows that Cassian did not understand Evagrius' principal intention.[192] This principal intention is the connection of each of the pieces of clothing to one of the principal vices. De Vogüé goes on to say that Cassian seems to advocate "a state of humility acquired and possessed apparently without struggle".[193] However, it seems that perhaps de Vogüé did not fully understand Cassian's principal intention. Cassian "deliberately chooses not to introduce the subject" of grace because, for Cassian, when the monk enters the monastery, he strips himself of his individuality through the first renunciation of the world, puts on the clothing of the community and becomes pure and simple in relation to the world and his brothers.[194] Pristas suggests that this passage "implicitly announce[s] the aim of *De Institutis* I-IV's instruction: in this, the very first stage of the monk's formation, Cassian is principally concerned with the monk's schooling in humility *vis-a-vis* others, not *vis-a-vis* God."[195] Cassian's ascetic life functions within a community atmosphere to a higher degree than Evagrius', therefore, the monk must first begin with becoming physically similar to his brothers while also working toward being like-minded with Christ as a community that makes up the whole body of Christ.[196] "Cassian's version of the ascetic life began with the renunciation of all things that made the monk an individual."[197] He did not "misunderstand" Evagrius' intention, but rather made deliberate choices concerning his own explanations and interpretations based on his principal goal and structure of *Institutes* 1-4 as well as his overall understanding of role of clothing in establishing the community in which his asceticism functions.

[192] Ibid, p.256.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Pristas, *Theological Anthropology*, p.137.
[195] Ibid, p.138.
[196] Cf. Catherine Chin, "Cassian, Cognitiion, and the Common Life," 147-166
[197] Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian*, p.157.

Thus far, there has been a clear textual influence from Basil, but the Evagrian influence has been much more superficial. They share similar structures, but not similar thought, which continues in the linen tunic, or *colobium*. Cassian explains that it barely reaches the elbows, leaving the hands free, which symbolizes cutting off the "deeds and works of this world". The linen is also significant since it "teach[es] them that they have utterly died to the worldly way of life".[198] Again Cassian points out the importance of the mortification of Jesus in the symbolism of the monastic habit. Goodrich points out that "Whereas the monastic [belt] and robe [the goatskin] were external signs of separation, symbols of renunciation aimed toward the external observer, the undergarment [linen tunic], the closest layer to the monk's flesh, was intended to remind him of the choice he had made: death to the world, life in God."[199] In the prologue to the *Praktikos*, Evagrius also talks about "the nakedness of their hands". He states that this allows for the manifestation of sincerity against vainglory. As we have just seen with the hood, and perhaps even more so, the only connection here between Evagrius and Cassian here is that they mention that the monks have their hands free. Their interpretations are completely different. There has not been much literal dependence so far in Cassian on Evagrius bringing out the possibility that they may just be giving details of a shared community experience rather than Cassian's specific dependence on Evagrius for these pieces of clothing.

However, when Cassian next turns to the cords, *analaboi*, there is a stronger similarity between the two. After he explains how they loop around the monk, he reveals that their purpose is so that the monks' "arms are freed, and they are unimpeded and ready for any activity as they strive to fulfil the Apostle's precept".[200] Evagrius also mentions the *analaboi* and has a similar structure of presentation. He first explains that they wrap around the monk "in the form of a cross" as "a symbol of the faith in Christ that sustains the gentle", and then

[198] Cassian, *Inst*. 1.4.
[199] Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian*, p.181-2.
[200] Cassian, *Inst.* 1.5

relates them to freeing the monk for unimpeded work. In this section there is a closer connection between Cassian and Evagrius than previously seen. Both monks explain that the cords wrap around the monk and then both explain that it helps the monk to complete his ascetic labour without being impeded by his clothing. However, Evagrius relates the form of the cords to the shape of the cross symbolizing faith in Christ and gentleness, which is the antithesis of anger.[201] It is interesting that Cassian, the more "Christocentric" writer, does not mention the form of the cross made by the wrapping of the cords.[202] Cassian does agree with Evagrius in the cords' importance for work. De Vogüé uses this for his own interpretation of Cassian saying that "for the first time, Cassian joins Evagrius in the campaign against the eight vices" because work is the main weapon for battling acedia.[203] However, as already discussed, de Vogüé did not give full credit to Cassian's own intentions concerning his interpretations of the monastic habit and is therefore superimposing onto Cassian's words an Evagrian meaning that is not explicitly there. While Cassian does talk about the relationship of work to acedia, he does not mention the vice at all during the first four books of the *Institutes*.[204]

The next piece of the monastic garb mentioned by Cassian, the *mafortes*, is not mentioned by Evagrius at all. It is a garment already well-known by Western monks[205] and is mentioned by Ambrose and Jerome.[206] The *mafortes* is an *angustum palliolum* (cheap, small cape) that covered the neck and shoulders "striving after modest style and cheapness and

[201] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p.258.
[202] cf. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.41,48,98.
[203] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p.258.
[204] Interestingly, Evagrius does not explicitly mention anger or acedia in his explanation of the *analaboi*, although De Vogüé and Guillaumont have made an excellent case for their connection. The only other time Evagrius does not mention the connected vice is with the staff. cf. de Vogüé, "Les sources", p.250; and Évagre le Pontique, *Traité pratique, ou, Le moine*, Antione and Claire Guillaumont (eds), *Sources chréttienes* 170-1, Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1971, prol.
[205] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p.264.
[206] cf. Ambrose, *Concerning Virginity* 1.11; Jerome, *Letter* 22.13 (although Jerome uses *mafortes* in a negative sense here)

economy. In this way they avoid the cost of coats and cloaks as well as any showiness."[207] De Vogüé also notes that *palliolum* is mentioned by Orsiesius, the abbot at Tabennisi, which is a community mentioned several times by Cassian.[208] The *mafortes* or *palliolum* was a kind of shawl which Cassian considered to encourage the virtue of poverty.

After the *mafortes*, Cassian turns to the goatskin, *melotis* or *pera*, which, along with the staff, is an "imitation of those who already in the Old Testament prefigured the thrust of this profession".[209] He uses Heb 11:37 in order to support this.[210] Then Cassian turns to the signification of the goatskin, which is actually quite similar to Evagrius' interpretation. Cassian states that it "signifies that, once all the turbulence of their carnal passions has been put to death, they must abide in the most elevated virtue and no wilfulness or wantonness of their youth and of former fickleness must remain in their bodies."[211] He first explains that it is a symbol of putting to death the "carnal passions" as well as a reminder to live in virtue and not to allow any former sin to remain. Evagrius, when explaining the *melote*, states that it is worn by "those always carrying around in their bodies the death of Jesus and muzzling all the irrational passions of the body, cutting back the wickedness of the soul by their communion in good; and loving poverty but fleeing from avarice as the mother of idolatry."[212] Evagrius also explains that it symbolizes the death of wickedness and living in goodness; however, there are important and interesting differences. Evagrius uses 2 Cor 4:10 to refer to the mortification of Jesus in the monk's "muzzling [of] all the irrational passions of the body" and then he also connects it the virtue of poverty against avarice (referring to Col 3:5). Cassian does not mention the mortification of Jesus explicitly though he does allude to the

[207] Cassian, *Inst.* 1.6.
[208] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p.258, though de Vogüé actually writes *palliorum,* but the edition of Orsiesius he cites has *palliolum*: cf. Orsiesius, *Liber* 22, in *Régle et Épitres de S. Pachome, Épitre de S. Théodore et* Liber *de S. Orsiesius: Texte Latin de S. Jérôme,* Dom. Amand Boon (ed.), Brussels: Éditions Nauwelaerts, 1932, p.123.
[209] Cassian, *Inst.* 1.7
[210] De Vogüé points out that Basil also uses Heb 11:37, but for the general poverty of clothing, whereas Cassian is establishing the history of the monastic profession through the clothing of the monk and the prophets of the Old Testament, cf. "Les sources", p.260.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 6

importance of mortification by saying the passions are to be "put to death". De Vogüé suggests that Cassian "is more interested in the general cause of mortification, including all the vices, rather than a particular repression of a particular vice," which is why he does not include Evagrius' mention of poverty or avarice.[213] Again, it is clear that Cassian is making deliberate choices concerning his agenda and audience.

Those in the Old Testament also carried a staff, which spiritually reminds the monk to constantly be armed against the "numerous barking dogs of the vices and the invisible beasts of the evil spirits". Cassian then states that this can be seen when "David begs to be freed" in Ps 73:19 LXX, showing that they must fight back "with the sign of the cross" and "destroy them by constantly recalling the Lord's suffering and by imitating his dying".[214] Not only is the staff a symbol of the spiritual weapons, but it also helps remind the monk of his reliance on the Lord and to imitate his mortification. Evagrius tells Anatolius that the staff "is a tree of life to all who hold it, reliable for those who lean on it as on the Lord (Prov 3:18)".[215] Evagrius also refers to the reminder of faith in the Lord, but he uses a different context and scriptural reference.

Cassian then raises what he considers an important question on the wearing or not wearing shoes as well as what kind of shoes are allowed if they are to be worn at all. Based on the Gospel (Mt 10:10), monks should not wear shoes, yet at the same time Jesus allowed the wearing of sandals based in Mk 6:9. Therefore, for the Egyptians, if one must wear shoes, then they must be sandals, because they "provide for the necessities of the body with a minimum of preoccupation and involvement".[216] However, they "do not allow them on their

[213] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p.259.
[214] Cassian, *Inst.* 1.8
[215] Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 7
[216] For sandals as mentioned in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, cf. Abba of Rome 1, Arsenius 42, and Theodora 7. In Abba of Rome 1, some monks were shocked to see the "Abba of Rome" (which is probably Arsenius) wearing sandals, and he explains them as a sign of his weakness. This supports Cassian's conflicting report about whether monks should wear shoes at all.

feet when they approach to celebrate or to receive the most holy mysteries".[217] This is because not wearing shoes reminds the monk that "the feet of the soul" must be "ready for the spiritual race".[218] De Vogüé brings up an interesting point here that Cassian alludes to a tension based on the Gospels on whether shoes are allowed or not, but does not mention this same tension between Mark and Matthew concerning the staff.[219] Importantly, de Vogüé also points out that Cassian is unique in linking the sandals to a scriptural precedent. While Evagrius does not mention shoes, Basil does say that "concerning footwear [...] whatever is simple, easily obtained, in keeping with our purpose and sufficient for our use, let this be taken up"; however, he does not use Scripture to support this point.[220] While Basil is merely concerned with the cheapness and simplicity of the shoes, Cassian takes this similar concern and roots it in Gospel precedent and symbolism.

After explaining each piece of clothing of the Egyptian monks, he explains that the monastic habit should be adapted based on climate and custom. Based on the climate of Gaul, a monk would need more than sandals, or a *colobium*, or a single tunic. Based on the customs of the region, Cassian explains that "wearing a little hood and having a *melotis* would evoke derision rather than edification in the beholder".[221] De Vogüé somewhat derisively says that Cassian is here suggesting that monks in Gaul wear real shoes, a tunic with long sleeves or two tunics with the cold, a large cap, and no goatskin, as well as the remaining Egyptian articles of the belt, *analaboi*, the coat, and the staff.[222] However, Basil also mentions that while clothing signifies ones profession, it also is meant for warmth and protection: "However, since in these matters some clothes are better and others less so, it follows that we

[217] Cassian, *Inst.* 1.9.2; de Vogüé also notes that Palladius, in the *Lausiac History*, and the Pachomian Rule mention the taking off of shoes (and coat) when going into the refectory and for synaxis. He also suggests that Cassian is reporting it, but he doesn't understand the reality of the practice. cf. de Vogüé, "Les sources", p.263.
[218] Ibid, 1.9.1; Cassian uses references to Song of Songs, Jeremiah, Psalms, and Paul to aid him in this point.
[219] cf. de Vogüé, "Les sources", p.261; he also mentions that the *pera/melote* is not allowed in Matthew either, which Cassian doesn't.
[220] Basil, *Reg.* 11.31
[221] Cassian, *Inst.* 1.10
[222] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p.264

should prefer whatever affords us the most comprehensive use, providing that the rule of voluntary poverty is in no way hindered".[223] Cassian has a similar approach to clothing as Basil in that he considers the clothing to signify one's profession, but that it must be tailored to one's climatic and cultural context, because the point of the clothing is humility and poverty, to be set apart as one who renounces the world, but not to be ostentatious or ridiculous in setting oneself apart. However, Cassian has set out to set out the monastic rules and customs of the Egyptian monks; therefore he must point out each piece of clothing that is their custom.

Finally, Cassian has a summary conclusion of the habit at the end of Book One. "Clothed, then, in these garments the soldier of Christ" is "mentally prepared for all the exercises and works of the monastery but he is also unimpeded by his garb itself. For the more zealous he is in the pursuit of obedience and toil, the more fervent he will be proven in purity of heart with respect to spiritual progress and the knowledge of divine things."[224] Pristas accurately points out that for Cassian, "by speaking of the monk's dress, Cassian declares what a monk is."[225] The monk is a soldier of Christ ready and prepared for the physical and mental labour necessary for purity of heart, which leads him to "spiritual progress" and salvation. Evagrius, after stating each piece of clothing and its meaning, also relates a formula of the ascetic life: "The fear of God, my child, strengthens faith, and abstinence in turn strengthens fear of God, and perseverance and hope render abstinence unwavering, and from these is born impassibility (*apatheia*) of which love is the offspring; love is the door to natural knowledge, which is followed by theology and ultimate blessedness."[226] Both monks state this formula after explaining the pieces of the monastic

[223] Basil, *Reg.* 11.15
[224] Cassian, *Inst.* 1.11.1
[225] Pristas, *Theological Anthropology of John Cassian*, p.18.
[226] Evagrius, *Praktikos prol* 8; This formula is repeated in a different way in *Praktikos* 81. Cassian and Evagrius' formulae are oriented differently, which will be expounded upon on the beginning of the Spiritual Life chapter.

habit, showing that both of them "link material aspects of asceticism to the ability to think certain things."[227] However, for Cassian, the "commonality of property" is a further emphasis not found within Evagrius' explanation. While Cassian formulates his own ideas and interpretations, there seems to be a certain similarity in structure and style with Evagrius that rightly should not be ignored – though neither should it be inflated beyond its limits.

I.3: Psalmody

The monastic clothing allows the monk to assimilate aesthetically among the brothers within the cenobium. Its establishment in the very first book of the *Institutes* may be in imitation of the prologue to the *Praktikos*; however, where Evagrius then turns to defining the stages and goals of the ascetic life, continuing into the eight principal vices, Cassian is not yet ready to move to that stage. He first sets out a detailed analysis of the practice of psalmody and prayer in the nighttime (Book Two) and the daytime (Book Three), and finally continues to the day to day experience of the cenobitic life (Book Four). Only then does he turn to the eight principal vices. His efforts to provide Gallic monks with the "correct" asceticism is extremely beneficial to modern scholars as he gives more detailed pictures of Egyptian practices not seen in contemporary authors. The two books on the psalmody and hours of the *Institutes* allow for clarity and insight not previously seen. Luke Dysinger points out that "while other monastic legislators and desert fathers, Evagrius included, mention only in passing such details as bodily posture and the duration of different intervals associated with psalmody, it is Cassian who provides a more detailed picture."[228] However, while Cassian gives more detail, it is still important that he is writing twenty years after he was among these communities in Egypt.

He criticizes a lack of uniformity and knowledge of the practice among the Gallic monasteries not found in those in Egypt. Therefore, he seeks to bring to Gaul an established

[227] Catherine Chin, "Cassian, Cogition, and the Common Life", p.152
[228] Dysinger, *Psalmody and Prayer in the Writings of Evagrius Ponticus*, p.53.

form of psalmody so that the monks of Gaul may better understand the reasons for the practice and the strength of character necessary for the ascetic life. Cassian not only focuses on the particular praxis, but also on the attentiveness necessary for the synaxis.[229] He roots the authority for the correct number of psalms in the heavens: "This number [twelve], which has been set in the distant past and which is inviolate in the monasteries of those regions even until now, has been kept for so many centuries because the elders declare that it was not established by human whim but was given to the fathers from heaven by the teaching of an angel."[230] Through this, Cassian is not only giving the number of twelve psalms an inviolable authority, but he is also locating the origins for the church in Alexandria as well as in Egyptian monasticism.[231] Cassian has connections to the *Apophthegmata* and Palladius in the angelic foundations of this rule. The *Lausiac History* was very recently in circulation when Cassian was writing the *Institutes,* so it difficult to tell whether Cassian and Palladius were familiar with the same oral tradition or if Cassian was influenced by the text of the *Lausiac History* itself.[232]

What can be seen, however, is that Cassian combines the influences of Philo, Eusebius, and Rufinus with Pachomian ideas while also developing his own ideas, just as can be seen in how he uses the influences of Basil and Evagrius in his own description of the monastic clothing.[233] While the "Rule of the Angel" has connections to the Pachomian Rule, Chadwick questions Cassian's connection to the Pachomian writings.[234] He does have some knowledge of the Pachomian practices, however, and whether what Cassian gives us concerning psalmody "was universal custom in Egypt before Cassian left may be wondered.

[229] Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian*, p.55-57.
[230] Cassian, *Inst*. 2.4
[231] De Vogüé, "Les sources", p.268; he also explains that both Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, translated by Rufinus, and Philo's *De vita contemplative* connect the origin of Christianity to Alexandria.
[232] Ibid, p.268 n.167
[233] Ibid, p.270.
[234] Dysinger says it "may be related" to the Pachomian legend "claiming angelic authority for monastic usages" since Cassian's story is similar to the "Rule of the Angel"; cf. *Psalmody and Prayer*, p.54

The variety of practice in Egypt among the Egyptians may still have been great[; however,] it appears to have been the practice among the communities of Pachomius."[235] He goes on to show the clear differences between Cassian's version of the Rule of the Angel and the Pachomian Rule and concludes that "no evidence of direct relation between Cassian and Pachomius can be drawn from the Rule of the Angel."[236] Cassian is clearly amongst the conversation of texts and oral tradition concerning Egyptian monasticism with his connections to the different monastic texts available, but there is continued evidence that he is working through his own experience as well as developing his own ideas.

Cassian's rule of psalmody helps facilitate the idea that through the ascetic life, the monk should strive to be praying constantly.[237] The rhythm of the prayer times as well as the actual rhythm of the synaxis itself fosters this goal. "Psalmody was one of the exterior ascetical practices which, together with fasting, keeping vigil, and restraint of speech, were recommended by almost all the desert fathers of the late fourth century."[238] Evagrius also considered the rhythm of prayer and the ascetic life to be vital to the ascetic life. Dysinger explains that "in Evagrius' model of the spiritual life this incessant psalmody and *melete* would have served many [...] purposes [...] such as keeping the mind fixed on God and constantly offering to God the interior world of thoughts and temptations."[239] For both Cassin and Evagrius this rhythm aids the individual in his ascetic journey.

However, there is another dimension to psalmody found in Cassian's exposition on the practice. Its role as a communal practice is vital to his asceticism. For Cassian, the individual monk has individual strengths – one cannot learn every virtue from a single elder.

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[235] Owen Chadwick, *John Cassian*, p.58.
[236] Ibid, p.60.
[237] In the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, Epiphanius corrects an abbot who says that his monastery keeps Terce, Sext and None hours of psalmody and prayer. Epiphanus states: "It is clear that you do not trouble about the other hours of the day, if you cease from prayer. The true monk should have prayer and psalmody continually in his heart." Epiphanius 3.
[238] Dysinger, *Psalmody and Prayer*, p.49.
[239] Ibid, p. 62.

Therefore, each monk adds his own virtuousness to the body of the community, which makes up the body of Christ.[240] Therefore, Catherine Chin suggests that "Cassian's focus here is less on the psalms or on their context than on the potential to create a single praying entity out of many monastic presences."[241] The specific monastic clothing brings the community together as one aesthetically allowing none to possess a material thing himself – all is owned by the community. Cassian also rejects the wearing of sackcloth because it might make one stand out from his brothers, either aesthetically, or in his own consideration of himself.[242] In addition, the practice of psalmody brings the brother together in a single rhythm of life and prayer so that they may all be in union among each other within the physical world in order to come together spiritually and contribute their individual strengths to the body of Christ.

The importance of Scripture in the daily functioning of the monk as well as in the contemplative life is shown in Cassian's interpretation of the hours, terce, sext, and none, as connected to the experiences of the apostles and Christ. The daily routine of the monk is centred in both the New Testament – terce, sext, none representing prayer of the apostles, the crucifixion, and Christ's descent into hell, respectively – as well as the Old Testament – the evening sacrifice as established by Mosaic law, which takes on a new meaning when combined with the last supper.[243] While Evagrius gives advice and instruction to young monks in both *Foundations* and *To Eulogios,* he does not present it with the same focus or force as Cassian. Evagrius' advice in the *Foundations* refers more to the inner disposition of the one taking on these activities. In *To Eulogios,* he describes the dangers of certain physical spaces, connection to family, friendship, etc. In this work, the dangers of the demons are also ever present and to be guarded against. Cassian does not place this kind of emphasis on the demons in the first four books of the *Institutes*. Rather, he is concerned with establishing the

[240] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 5.4.3
[241] Catherine Chin, "Cassian, Cognition, and the Common Life", p.153
[242] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 1.2.3
[243] Cf. Cassian, *Inst*. 3.3.1-11

rules, customs, and scriptural or spiritual foundations of those rules and customs. He is working to establish his asceticism as the correct one against the ever present background of the Gallic monasteries. Evagrius, on the other hand, is established within the Egyptian desert, answering questions or giving advice about his current physical space and community.

I.4: Entrance to the Cenobium

It is only after spending three books on the monastic clothing along with the daily and nightly routine of psalmody and prayer that Cassian then explains how one might even enter the cenobium. Again details are found in Cassian concerning the specific functioning of the cenobium that are not found in Evagrius. While this is clearly based on their individual contexts and purposes, it is necessary to give the details that Cassian gives in order to understand his full picture of the ascetic life in relation to Evagrius' entire ascetic program as well. The fact that he includes these specifications provides a more detailed picture of the life one would experience through Cassian's works. This is also a necessary topic, along with psalmody and the relationship of the abba for seeing that the *Institutes* is not actually most closely related to the *Praktikos*. Rather, it is has connections with a number of Evagrius' works: the *Praktikos*, *To Eulogios*, and *Foundations* for the first four books, in addition to *On the Eight Thoughts* and *On the Vices opposed to the Virtues* for the remaining eight. Combined with these are Cassian's own experiences and decisions based on those experiences – both in Egypt and in thereafter – in what he would include in his own version of the practical life.

For Cassian, the renunciant must prove his foundational perseverance and humility in order even to be admitted into the cenobium. One cannot decide on whim to join with the possible security of leaving, nor can one only join the community in order to find safety. Rather, he must prove his intent to commit himself to the ascetic life for the remainder of his

earthly life. Therefore, first he must spend ten days outside the cenobium pleading to be allowed in, but only receiving rebukes and insults by all those passing by in return. This is to test "his perseverance and desire, as well as...his humility and patience."[244] The insults also indicate how he will react when he progresses to the spiritual battle where he will be up against much harsher enemies tempting and taunting him. Then, when he is finally allowed into the cenobium, he is stripped of everything he has with him – his clothes, any possessions, everything – and is then clothed by the Abba. Cassian spends a considerable time explaining the necessity of giving up even the smallest amount of money, which the cenobium does not take, even from those in the wealthy classes. This is necessary so that the entrant does not have in the back of his mind that he may retake up his money if the cenobium doesn't work for him – he must be fully committed to the renunciation from the very beginning. The cenobium also will not take the money for its support because this might give the entrant a sense of pride on entering.[245]

This kind of rigorous entrance procedure and necessity of denying one's own will is also found in Postumianus' account of the Egyptian monasteries in Sulpicius Severus' *Dialogus*. Postumianus says that obedience is the chief virtue of those in some of the monasteries of the desert.[246] He goes on to say that "in fact, any one applying for admission is not received by the Abbot of the monastery on any other condition than that he be first tried and proved; it being understood that he will never afterwards decline to submit to any injunction of the Abbot, however arduous and difficult..."[247] Sulpicius Severus' *Dialogus* was published around 400, therefore Cassian's monastic audience in Gaul would have already been familiar with the idea of a stringent and difficult entrance system in Egypt.[248]

[244] Cassian, *Inst*. 4.3.1
[245] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 4.4
[246] cf. Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogus*, I.10 and I.17
[247] Sulpicius Severus, *Dial*. I.17
[248] The Gaul portrayed in the *Dialogus* would certainly not have been interested in Cassian's strict version of asceticism. Sulpicius at one point asks Postumianus to refrain from talking about the strictness of the Egyptians

Cassian then goes on to explain what happens after the novice gains entrance into the monastery. First, he will then spend a full year with an elder who is in charge of welcoming travellers and strangers into the cenobium. It is only after he demonstrates his patience and humility in this year that he is admitted into the community. He is then assigned to another elder "who is responsible for ten younger men, who have been entrusted to him by the abbe and whom he both teaches and rules" in imitation of the tradition founded by Moses in Exodus.[249] He then continues to be tested through his education from the Abba. In the process of gaining entry to the cenobium, Cassian stresses the gravity of the commitment to this life. The outcome is the highest outcome one could possibly hope for, but if one does not enter into the ascetic journey in the correct way, then the outcome could be the harshest possible. It requires a complete renunciation of one's social and worldly identity. It then requires the complete renunciation of one's own judgment in the elder-novice relationship so stressed by Cassian. The process of entering into the cenobium shows in greater detail Cassian's understanding of the expression of the first renunciation. Therefore, this exposition provides a foundation of understanding for the following two sections on the obedience to the Abba and the three renunciations.

I.5: Abba and Obedience

Cassian places great importance on the relationship between monk and the Abba. As he is continuing to describe the path through with the novice becomes a full member of the cenobitic community, he explains that it is through this relationship that that he "may be able to ascend even to the loftiest heights of perfection" and will be taught how "to conquer his

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so as not to offend the Gauls. Postumianus replies, "I shall take care in future not to mention the abstinence of any one, in case the difficult example should offend our friends the Gauls." cf. Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogus* I.5

[249] Cassian, *Inst.* 4.7

desires".[250] This is where the foundations are laid for the spiritual battle and eradication of the vices since "someone who has not first learned to overcome his desires can never extinguish anger or sadness or the spirit of fornication, nor can he maintain true humility of heart or unbroken unity with his brothers or solid and enduring peace, nor can he even stay in the cenobium for any length of time."[251] One of the clearest stories concerning obedience to one's elder, even in superfluity, is the story of watering the dry stick. In the *Institutes,* Cassian uses this story to show the obedience of Abba John, who would submit himelf frequently to obedience of another. This other monk "would frequently impose on him many things that were even superfluous, unnecessary, and impossible."[252] Therefore, he told John to water a dry stick until it sprouted roots and began to grow. After a year of watching John water the stick daily even in the harshest conditions, finally the elder asked him if it had sprouted roots, to which John replied that he did not know. The elder then picks up the stick out of the ground and throws it away.

The force of this story is that even though John had no idea if his efforts were accomplishing anything, he was focused on the obedience to the elder, not on the outcome of his actions. This story is also found in the *Apophthegmata Patrum,* under John the Dwarf. However, in this version of the story, John watered the stick for three years after which it bore fruit. The abba then calls the fruit "the fruit of obedience".[253] This fruit-bearing version of the story is also related by Sulpicius Severus in his *Dialogus*. Postumianus saw the tree for himself that had sprouted from the dry storax, which had been planted in sandy soil and watered for three years.[254] The point of both of these latter stories is the reward that can come out of obedience – here the reward is clearly a miracle (as Postumianus calls it). However, for

[250] Cassian, *Inst*. 4.8
[251] Cassian, ibid.
[252] Cassian, *Inst.* 4.24.1
[253] John the Dwarf 1
[254] Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogus* 1.19; Cassian and Sulpicius' stories both contain the detail that the monk had to walk two miles to get water in order to water the stick. However, Sulpicius' story also shares the length of three years with the *Apophthegm*.

Cassian, the focus of the story is not on some wonderful, improbable outcome of obedience to what seems to be a ridiculous task, but rather the obedience itself.

John fully renounced his own will in following the will of the elder. He did not even know if anything had changed because he did not need to know. Beyond this, not only must the monk practice obedience to his elder, but he must also reveal every single thought – whether good or bad – to him in order that they learn not to work through their own judgment, but "to credit them with badness or goodness as the elder's examination discloses and makes clear."[255] Through this, the novice learns to never be ashamed of his inner thoughts, but rather to be open and honest about them so that the devil may never be able to deceive him.

Shame is especially important in this practice, as Cassian explains: "For they declare that it is an invariable and clear sign that a though is from the devil if we are ashamed to disclose it to an elder."[256] Cassian's purpose is to describe not only the rules of the cenobium, but the perfection of heart through community. His emphasis on community is not an Evagrian influence, but one of his own purposes and ideals. In *To Eulogios*, Evagrius refers to the relationship between the elder and the younger monk, but as with the whole tone of this work, it is much more focused on the individual experience than the communal ascetic experience found in Cassian. For Cassian, the elder-novice relationship strengthens the renunciation of the personal will, and the morphing of the will into spiritual unity with the divine will. The negligence of one's own will and judgment in obedience to the abba's will and judgment allows the monk to lay the foundation of subjecting his human will to the divine will.

The unity of will among the members of the cenobium is fostered by the revelation of thoughts to the elder. Catherine Chin examines this emphasis in Cassian and concludes that

[255] Cassian, *Inst.* 4.9
[256] Cassian, ibid.

"the inclusion of both good and bad thought in the shared cognitive process reveals that the commonality of thinking is the primary aim of the practice."[257] The community of the cenobium is not only important in providing a place and structure for the ascetic life, it allows for another dimension on the purification of the heart. Cassian's stress on the eradication of shame is necessary for his ascetic goal. Shame involves judging oneself against others, as well as the worrying about the judgment of others on oneself, which is a chaotic and nervous disposition. For Cassian, the journey of the ascetic life is about purity and stability in Christ, which can only take place through rooting out and illuminating the darkest places of the heart.

I.6: Renunciation

All through the first four books of the *Institutes,* the theme of renunciation is a constant. Cassian refers to it through these books, but does not provide an exposition on the full three renunciations until Conference three. This is because the first two concern the practical life, and the third is found in the contemplative life. However, it is included here in this chapter on the practical life because it provides the foundations for the interior, spiritual aspects of the Cassian's asceticism. Cassian's places great emphasis on the combination of purification in *both* the inner and outer man because his eschatology is one of body and soul. Cassian finds his inspiration for the three renunciations in Evagrius, yet, like most Evagrian ideas, he develops it to fit into his own theology and context. Cassian was writing specifically for the monks of Gaul, who participated in a type of asceticism he strongly disagreed with.

> "Early fifth-century Gallic ascetic literature has made the case for fusing the ascetic and aristocratic lifestyle...By conflating *otium* and Christianity, they provided a wide gate through which the aristocrat could pass with most of his or her traditional

[257] Catherine Chin, "Cassian, Cognition, and the Common Life", in *Ascetic Culture: Essays in Honor of Philip Rousseau,* Robin Darling Young and Blake Leyerle, (eds.), Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013, p.154.

> prerequisites intact. The models proffered emphasize an ascetic life tailored to fit the values and *mores* of well-born aristocrats."[258]

Cassian calls for a complete and total renunciation of the world – including social status. While "the other founders of Western monasticism, Ambrose and Augustine, were devotees of the monastic ideal; Cassian was completely monastic."[259] Interestingly, while Cassian allows for many compromises within the ascetic journey – dress, food, understanding the vices, etc – he will not compromise at the beginning of that journey. There is no room for the world in the ascetic life. Therefore, Cassian places an extra emphasis on the complete renunciation in respect to the diluted version found in Gaul. Evagrius, on the other hand, roots his renunciation in his understanding of cosmology, rather than in his social context.

In fact, renunciation is the essential characteristic of Cassian's asceticism. An ascetic is one who practices renunciation (ἀπόταξις or *renuntiatio*); therefore, it is vital to understand how Cassian uses and develops this ideal found in Evagrius' works. Both monks use "renunciant" and "renunciation" to delineate an ascetic or the choice to enter into the ascetic life. However, while Cassian uses Evagrius' concept of the "three renunciations" as the guide to the ascetic life, he changes the third renunciation and also develops the idea of renunciation itself within his monastic handbook with specific reference to the Gallic asceticism of which he so disapproves. In this way it becomes clear how Cassian's context and intention affect his development of Evagrian ideas.

First it is necessary to understand Evagrius' own presentation of the "three renunciations" as well as renunciation in general. In *Kephalaia Gnostica* 1.78-80 Evagrius states the three renunciations as follows: "The first renunciation is the voluntary abandonment of the objects of this world for the sake of the knowledge of God. The second renunciation is the laying aside of vice, which happens through divine grace and human

[258] Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian*, p.151-2.
[259] Bernard McGinn and Patricia Ferris McGinn, *Early Christian Mystics: The Divine Vision of the Spiritual Masters*, New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2003, p.61.

diligence. The third renunciation is separation from ignorance, which naturally becomes apparent to people according to the state they have attained."[260] As one reads through these three renunciations, it becomes clear that these are fundamental precepts of the overall ascetic program and worldview Evagrius lays out. When these renunciations are combined with Evagrius' progressive structure of the ascetic journey, *praktike*, *gnostike*, and *theologia*, the fullness of his schema is illuminated. Interestingly, however, they do not correspond as first renunciation-*praktike*, second-*gnostike*, and third-*theologia*. When considering the renunciations, first one must renounce the outer, material things of the world created by Christ after the Movement; then one must renounce those things attached to the body – the vessel created for navigating the material world – and that which arose in the soul with the Movement; i.e. the vices. The goal of doing both of these things is to cease the distractions of the material world in order to progress to the third renunciation, which is the "separation from ignorance". Turning to consider the stages of the ascetic life, in *Gnostikos* 49, Evagrius says that "the goal of the *praktike* is to purify the intellect and to render it free of passions; that of the *gnostike* is to reveal the truth hidden in all beings; but to distance the intellect from matter and to turn it towards the First Cause - this is a gift of theology."[261]

Praktike is the battle against the vices, *gnostike* is the second natural contemplation in which one gains knowledge and understanding of the material world and its organization, and *theologia* is the first natural contemplation in which one gains knowledge and understanding of the immaterial world – which eventually brings about salvation through reunification. Therefore, the renunciations and the tripartite scheme of the ascetic journey roughly correspond thus: first and second renunciation-*praktike*, third renunciation-*physike* and

[260] *KG* 1.78-80; Evagrius also repeats the renunciations in *On Thoughts* 26: "It is not possible to acquire knowledge without having made the first, the second, and the third renunciation. The first renunciation is the voluntary abandonment of the things of the world for the sake of the knowledge of God; the second is the rejection of evil which ensues by the grace of Christ our Saviour and by the zeal of the human individual; the third renunciation is the separation from ignorance of those things which are naturally manifest to people in proportion to their state."

[261] *Gnostikos* 49; All quotations of *Gnostikos* are from: ldysinger.com

theologike. The combination of the first two within *praktike* includes separation from the world (wealth, family, possessions, etc.) which is made up of the structure, order, names, bodies, and numbers Christ created and defined in the second creation. After this separation, it is then necessary to separate oneself from that which arose with the body and within the soul in and after the Movement. These are practised through *praktike*, which often has more of an emphasis on the battle against the vices and the demons than on the worldly renunciation; however, this does not take away from the necessity of both in order to practice this stage of the ascetic life in the right way. Its goal is to allow the ascetic to gain virtue, which is the foundation of the essential knowledge. The final separation is from ignorance, which is practiced through *gnostike*, or the gaining of essential knowledge of the material world which then illuminates the essential knowledge of the immaterial, which is *theologia*. As the ascetic separates from the world, the body and soul, and finally any ignorance left within the *nous*, he gains virtue, essential knowledge of the material and immaterial, and finally reunification of the *nous* with the Trinity. It is important to bear in mind that the renunciations are about separation and, through this separation, the stages of the ascetic life allow for the gaining of something previously lost. Columba Stewart points out that while "these stages were progressive and developmental, in the sense that they described advancement from beginnings steps in the life to monastic perfection[,] they were not, however, strictly chronological or necessarily successive..."[262] To summarize, the struggle to gain what was lost is not successive, whereas the renunciations in a more successive manner.

Evagrius deliberately reveals the renunciations in certain works. He presents the first renunciation in *To Eulogios,* which is a work intended for those at the beginning stages of the ascetic life. He praises the renunciation as well as expanding on it: "The first of the illustrious contests is voluntary exile, especially when to this end one should go abroad alone, like an

[262] Columba Stewart, "Evagrius Ponticus and the Eastern Monastic Tradition on the Intellect and the Passions," *Modern Theology* 27, 2, Blackwell Publishing: April 2011, p.267.

athlete stripped of homeland, family, and possessions."[263] It is clear here that entering into the ascetic life involves renouncing every outer tie to the material world: family, wealth, possessions – essentially everything that gives one identity within the material world. He does not, however, continue to illuminate the further renunciations, because the intended reader of *To Eulogios* is not yet at that stage; however, Evagrius does introduce the vices and virtues in this text, but does not yet plainly state the second renunciation. He does present all three renunciations in *On Thoughts* and *Kephalaia Gnostica* – the former work intended for any involved in the ascetic life and the battle against the thoughts/demons, i.e. the second renunciation, and the latter intended for those who are have progressed to an advanced, contemplative level, i.e. the third renunciation. Perhaps Evagrius does not mention the second renunciation in *To Eulogios* because he intends his words on the vices to be an introduction to what comes next in the ascetic struggle; whereas in *On Thoughts*, the reader has already moved into the long and difficult battle with the thoughts/vices/demons. This is the same structure found in Cassian's *Institutes* and *Conferences*.

Cassian structures the *Institutes* and *Conferences* in a very deliberate way. The first four books of the *Institutes* are dedicated to the rules of the ascetic/monastic life. He sets these out in the very beginning of his monastic program in order for those who are entering into – or contemplating entering – the monastery to fully understand exactly what is expected of them in the ascetic life. He delineates rules for entering the monastery, dress, day and evening prayer times, the functioning of the community, obedience, hospitality, fasting, and manual labour. All of these aspects are part of renunciation. In fact, they are all part of the first renunciation, although Cassian never explicitly states this in these books. The following eight books of the *Institutes* are dedicated to the identification of the eight principal vices and

[263] *To Eulogios* 2.2; All quotations of *To Eulogios* are from: Sinkewicz, *Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus*.

understanding the need to eradicate them from within oneself.[264] As the novice integrates in the monastic community through the first renunciation, he begins to consider the vices and his own strengths and weaknesses. Then he may move into the *Conferences*. The first Conference is "On the goal of the monk" and the second is "On discretion", which is the most important virtue for the journey through eradicating the vices and gaining the rest of the virtues. Cassian then dedicates the third Conference to the three renunciations indicating their importance. It is clear by his admission at the end of Conference Three that he has deliberately waited to state the three renunciations. At the end of the Conference with Paphnutius, "the priest of our community—that is to say, of the one which dwelled in the desert of Skete"[265], Cassian explains how and Germanus felt after learning about the three renunciations:

> "...although we believed that we had to attain to the heights of perfection by achieving the first renunciation, which we were striving to pursue with all our strength, we just realized that we had not yet even begun to dream of the summit of monasticism when, after having learned very little in the cenobia about the second renunciation, we discovered that we had not heard anything about the third, in which all perfection is contained and which is vastly superior to the other two."[266]

These renunciations are to be learned and understood all together when one is already on the monastic journey and well into the first renunciation, otherwise one might get discouraged and want to leave.

Paphnutius describes the three renunciations after describing the three reasons people enter the monastic life. He states: "The first is that by which in bodily fashion we despise all the wealth and resources of the world. The second is that by which we reject the erstwhile behaviour, vices, and affections of soul and body. The third is that by which we call our mind away from everything that is present and visible and contemplate only what is to come and

[264] It is important to note here that Cassian divided the vices and the demons more clearly than Evagrius. This distinction will be dealt with in Chapter 3.
[265] *Conf.* 3.1.1
[266] *Conf.* 3.22.4

desire those things that are invisible."[267] The first two renunciations are essentially the same as Evagrius', but the third is Cassian's own development. He describes the first two renunciations in his own way, both with the physical renunciations of the world and the struggle with the vices and the battle against the demons. The first renunciation is developed in specific reference to Cassian's intended audience – the monks of Gaul. Richard Goodrich points out that part of Cassian's extreme renunciation is in response to his vehement disagreement with the blending of asceticism and the aristocratic lifestyle found in Gaul: "Cassian took exception to this idea and advanced an asceticism that began with a true, self-immolating renunciation, rather than the rhetoric of renunciation offered to an elite readership by other promoters of the ascetic life."[268] While Goodrich also states that "what Cassian wrote would prove far too difficult for much of his target audience", Cassian did work to make allowances for the Gallic monks in tempering some of what he considered to be the harsher Egyptian ascetic practices.[269]

The third renunciation, however, is not divergent because in reference to the practices of the Gallic monks, but rather in reference to his divergent theology. "Evagrius' third renunciation is of ignorance, while Cassian's is about the move from the present, earthly realities to invisible, future ones".[270] Although the renunciation of ignorance for Evagrius is also a separation from the present and visible, because of their differing cosmologies based on creation, the third renunciation has a different meaning for each monk. Both monks prescribe the obliteration of individuality. However, for Evagrius, the renunciations are about rejection of individuality in the public material world by renouncing wealth, possessions, and family; then the rejection of individuality based on one's own personal struggle with the vices and demons; and finally, the rejection of being human through the separation from the

[267] *Conf.* 3.6.1
[268] Richard Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian*, p.151.
[269] Ibid, p.208.
[270] Columba Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.46 n.53.

amount of ignorance that necessitated "humanity". It is about renouncing worldly individuality, personal individuality, and cosmic individuality in order to return to the Unity in which there were no distinct rational beings, only *noes*. However, for Cassian, while the first two renunciations are also about rejecting worldly individuality and then personal individuality, the third is not about a cosmic renunciation of being human, but rather a renunciation of what separates the human from God in its original creation. One must renounce the visible, present reality of the corrupt humanity and focus on the invisible future reality in which humanity will be returned to its original state and relationship to the Trinity. For Evagrius, humanity itself is temporal, whereas for Cassian, the current *state* of humanity is temporal.

I.7: Conclusion

Too often Cassian's own ideas are relegated to his Evagrian influence. While much of this Evagrian influence lies in the eight principal vices, purity of heart, prayer, and contemplation, it is necessary to realize that there is much more in Cassian's works than an Evagrian influence. Throughout this chapter, it is has become clear that the practical life is given quite distinct detail in Cassian that is either not found in Evagrius or has been developed in Cassian's own way. By constantly referring to the Evagrian element of Cassian's works, it implies that Evagrius is a constant and consistent factor; however, this is not the case. He includes the process of entering the cenobium, more details concerning psalmody and prayer times, as well as much higher emphasis on the relationship between Abba and monk. These details provide a bigger picture of just how Cassian understood the practical life.

Even those aspects that are quite similar to Evagrius – dress and renunciation – have important divergences. Cassian's framing of the monastic dress is Evagrian, yet his explanations and understandings of them are not. There is also the fact that the actual pieces

of clothes were part of the Egyptian community as a whole, and it is only the process of spiritual interpretation that is specificially Evagrian. In addition, while the first two renunciations are also Evagrian, the third is based upon Cassian's divergent theology causing it to be his own development. The practical life shows that Cassian is able to easily utilize what he has learned from Evagrius and develop it for his own purposes. His audience, context, and theology are all important factors in understanding his relationship to the elder monk. This theme will continue throughout the next chapters on the vices, the spiritual battle, and the contemplative life.

Chapter II: The Eight Principal Vices

II.1: Introduction

One of the greatest impacts Cassian had on the development of Western Christianity is his use of Evagrius' list of the eight principal vices. It is through Cassian's use and interpretation of these principal vices that the seven deadly sins would be born just over 150 years later from the writings of Gregory the Great. While there is no doubt that Cassian uses the eight principal vices first seen in the works of Evagrius, he has not merely transferred them into his own works. He standardizes a consistent order and develops them further. After first establishing the practical life in books 1-4 of the *Institutes*, Cassian then provides his main exposition on the individual vices devoting books 5-12 to descriptions of each of the eight principal vices as well as their remedies: gluttony, fornication, avarice, anger, sadness, acedia, vainglory, and pride. He then provides a further exposition on them in Conference five, situating them within the spiritual battle he had begun to explain in the early Conferences. Though these are the sections of his works that are focused specifically on the eight principal vices, they continue to run through the entirety of his works showing his full integration of them into his ascetic system.

Evagrius as well has specific works which include focused expositions on the principal vices, yet they too are fully integrated into his asceticism. It is important to note here that Evagrius actually speaks of the vices primarily as thoughts (*logismoi*), but in the effort of continuity, they will be referred to throughout this chapter as vices.[271] Evagrius

[271] Cassian prefers *vitium* or even *passio*, and occasionally uses *cogitatio* but never in *Inst.* 5-12 or *Conf.* 5; cf. Colum ba Stewart, "John Cassian's schema of Eight Principal Faults and his Debt to Origen and Evagrius", in *Jean Cassien entre l'Orient et l'Occident,* Cristian B. Jakab (ed.), Paris: Beauchesne, 2003, p.213. That being

discusses the eight principal thoughts throughout his works, but treats them specifically in six main works: *On the Eight Evil Spirits, On the Vices Opposed to the Virtues*[272]*, Antirrhetikos, Praktikos, On Thoughts,* and *Exhortation to Monks 1*. Each of these works, with the exception of *On Thoughts,* is written in a typical Evagrian style – made up of chapters which "are dense wisdom-sayings" that either give brief definitions or advice, or "need to be mulled over and, sometimes, deciphered."[273] Between these six works, Evagrius' organization and emphasis concerning the eight vices changes.

As stated above, although Cassian's list finds its inspiration in the Evagrian list of eight principal vices, it is not a straight copy in understanding, or even order. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the true relationship between Cassian's vices and those found in Evagrius in order to clarify his relationship to the elder monk in one of the most often cited examples of his dependence on Evagrius. This chapter will look first at the vices as a whole through the specific numbering of eight as well as their order and organization found in each of the two monks' works. This will provide a foundation for the next section in which each of the vices, gluttony, fornication, avarice, anger, sadness, acedia, vainglory, and pride, will be defined and developed according to each monk in order to provide a full exposition on the relationship of Cassian's understanding of the vices to the Evagrian understanding. Lastly, the vice of envy must be explained since, although it does not ever appear in Cassian's list of principal vices, it does appear in one of Evagrius'. It also has a certain prominence throughout Cassian's works that necessitate including it here.

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said, the significance of thoughts/vices in the relationship between Evagrius and Cassian in their respective ascetic theologies will be dealt with in the next chapter, on the Spiritual Battle.

[272] The Greek title of this work is Περὶ τὰς ἀντιζήλους τῶν ἀρετῶν κακίας, which actually translates to *On the evil adversaries of the virtues*. The Latin title uses the word "vice": *De vitiis quae opposita sunt virtutibus*; this an important thing to note that Evagrius does not use the word "vice", but instead uses "thought", "adversary", "demon" or "spirit"; see note above.

[273] William Harmless, S.J. & Raymond R. Fitzgerald, S.J., "The Sapphire Light of the Mind: The *Skemmata* of Evagrius Ponticus," *Theological Studies* 62, 2001, p.506.

II.2: Number, Order, and Organization

II.2.1: The "Eight"

While Evagrius is not the first to speak of virtues and vices, he is the first to enumerate eight as principal temptations. At the end of the Prologue to the *Praktikos*, Evagrius states that he is "going to discuss the practical and the Gnostic life, not as much as we have seen or heard, but what we have learned from [the elders] to say to others."[274] Unlike Cassian, Evagrius does not often separate himself from the content and teachings of his works, making this statement seem less of a late antique trope than a real reminder of Evagrius' connection to a community and network of monks, all involved in the evolving practice and teachings of asceticism. This is further supported by *Letter* 8, which is addressed to Abba Loukios, whom he sent the *Antirrhetikos* to in order that he

> "may read and correct it, and complete what is deficient, in case we have inexactly presented one or another of the unclean thoughts and not hit upon the proper contradiction addressed against it. For I acknowledge your worthiness that until now I have not properly understood the demonic thoughts..."[275]

This passage clearly shows Evagrius engaging in the community and asking for another's expertise on the "unclean thoughts". He does not feel the need to explain the number of eight that are included in the *Antirrhetikos* possibly suggesting that he was working within an already developing tradition or conversation. Cassian further supports the idea of a general tradition and development of principal vices in *Conference* 5: "That there are eight principal vices which attack the monk is everyone's firm opinion."[276] Although, for Cassian, this may be a part of distancing himself from a direct connection with Evagrius while also expounding Evagrian ideas; however, it also may be a part of an actual general idea developing in the

[274] Evagrius, *Prak.* prol 9.
[275] Evagrius, *Letter* 8, as translated by Luke Dysinger
[276] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.18.1

Egyptian desert. In their edition of the *Praktikos,* Antione and Claire Guillaumont investigate where the specific number of eight comes from and suggest that Evagrius was thinking of the biblical passage Luke 11:24-26 when he settled on eight thoughts. The significance of this passage is also ruminated by Origen, along with Deuteronomy 7:1, however, he concludes that vices are infinite.[277] The Guillaumonts also point out clear influences from Stoicism and Hellenistic vice and virtue lists in Evagrius' understanding of these concepts and perhaps the number of vices.[278]

While Cassian's number of eight is most likely a direct Evagrian influence, he actually provides a reason for the number through scriptural evidence. In *Conference* Five, Germanus asks this important question: "Why, then, are there eight vices that attack us...?"[279] Serapion, the elder who is leading this conference, has just explained that the vices are the seven nations from Deuteronomy 7:1-2 – a biblical passage Origen also used to consider a specific number for the vices. Germanus then asks why there are eight if Deuternomy gives seven nations – to which Serapion explains that "Moses, or rather the Lord through him, was speaking to those who had already left Egypt and been freed from a very strong people", which is representative of Gluttony for the monk who has embarked on the ascetic life.[280] Serapion then goes on to give further biblical support from Genesis 15:18-21, where the number is ten instead of seven. Again, this is explained by reason of his monastic audience – there are ten "once idolatry and blasphemy have been added. [...] But if someone has accepted renunciation, left that place, conquered gluttony by the grace of God, and some to the spiritual desert, he has been freed from the attack of three nations and will only wage war

[277] Évagre le Pontique, *Traité Pratique ou Le Moine,* Antoine et Claire Guillaumont (eds.), Paris: Les Éditions de Cerf, 1971, p.71-2.
[278] Ibid, p.74-5; for a short but detailed account of the possible influences on Evagrius' idea of evil thoughts, cf. Kevin Corrigan, *Evagrius and Gregory: Mind, Soul and Body in the 4th century*, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009, 77-8
[279] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.17
[280] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.18.1-2.

against the seven that are enumerated by Moses."[281] Finally, Serapion gives even more support from Matthew 15:43-5 ("...he goes and takes seven spirits worse than himself...") and Proverbs 26:25 ("If your enemy asks you in a loud voice, do not give in to him, for there are seven evils in his soul.") Again, Gluttony is separated slightly from the following seven, either as the spirit that goes and returns with seven worse than himself, or the one "coax[ing...] in a humble fashion".[282]

Columba Stewart points out that the explanations found in Cassian "may have been taught by Evagrius but we have no extant textual evidence for them" showing that it is important to consider both the idea that it is Cassian's own development, and also something he may have learned from the elder monk.[283] However, while it may be possible that Evagrius has these passages in mind, it is impossible to say for sure since he never mentions a specific reason for the number eight. Nevertheless, it is vital to ensure that Cassian's explanations are not read back into Evagrius.

II.2.2: Organization and Order

The organization found most often for Evagrius' list of the eight vices is gluttony, fornication, avarice, sadness, anger, acedia, vainglory, and pride, which is used in *On the Vices Opposed to the Virtues*, *Antirrhetikos,* and *Praktikos.* The first of these works is as simple in style as it sounds, and is made up of short paragraphs describing each of nine thoughts – inserting envy between vainglory and pride – and their opposing virtues. The second systematically gives a series of manifestations for each of the eight thoughts and

[281] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.22.
[282] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.25.1-2.
[283] Columba Stewart, "John Cassian's scheme of eight principal faults and his debt to Origen and Evagrius," in *Jean Cassian entre l'Orient et l'Occident,* Cristian B. Jakab (ed.), Paris: Beauchesne, 2003, p.212.

offers a biblical quotation to battle against each particular manifestation.[284] The third concerns the practical life, including the contents and significance of the monastic habit, definitions of the eight principal thoughts and how to resist and overcome them, as well as recognizing the ultimate passionless state of *apatheia*. Another work in which Evagrius treats the principal vices is *Exhortations to Monks*, which is a series of sentences covering various topics of concern for monks. In this work, there is a different order: gluttony, fornication, avarice, corporeal concerns, the wandering mind (acedia), anger, acedia (again), sadness, and pride. With the addition of corporeal concerns, acedia being mentioned twice, sadness coming after both anger and acedia, and the omission of vainglory, it is clear that Evagrius has a flexible structure to his principal vices.

In *On Thoughts*, Evagrius does not give his traditional list of eight, but rather foregrounds gluttony, avarice, and vainglory as the three main vices off which all other vices sprout. From gluttony comes fornication; from gluttony, avarice, and vainglory comes anger; and from avarice comes sadness and pride. Evagrius also mentions acedia farther into the work, but not in this kind of direct connection. Sinkewicz suggests that this difference is because "*On Thoughts* offers a more advanced teaching to those who have crossed the threshold of impassibility and have begun to enjoy the fruits of the Gnostic life...[therefore, it] offers no systematic or detailed treatment of each of the eight thoughts" like the other texts that deal with the principal thoughts.[285] It is in *On the Eight Evil Spirits* (Περὶ τῶν οκτῶ πνευμάτων τῆς πονηρίας) that the same order that Cassian uses found: gluttony, fornication, avarice, anger, sadness, acedia, vainglory, and pride. This shared organization and Cassian's use of "spirit" over "thought" underscores the Guillaumonts' suggestion that Cassian has the

[284] Cassian actually provides his own sort of *antirrhetikos*, but only uses one quotation (Psalm 70:1, "O God, incline unto my aid; O Lord, make haste to help me.") for each of the different temptations he describes, cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 10.10
[285] Sinkewicz, *Evagrius Ponticus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus*, p.136.

most connection with *On the Eight Evil Spirits* with further influence from the *Praktikos*.[286] Interestingly, the sequence of anger before sadness is also found in *To Eulogios*, where the vices are not presented as a systematic set of eight, and not all are even mentioned.[287] The text, *On the Vices Opposed to the Virtues,* is also thought to be addressed to Eulogios, but places sadness before anger (as well as adding envy).

While Evagrius uses the eight vices as a general list of the principal temptations, and sometimes will also expound on their direct relation to each other, "Cassian's systematic mind [...] goes beyond Evagrius in the distinctions he draws up of the vices."[288] He always gives the order mentioned above, which is only found once in the Evagrian works. Cassian also gives a tidy explanation of the relationships between the eight principal vices. In Conference Five, he explains that vices are "either natural like gluttony or unnatural like avarice. But they have four kinds of operation": those that require bodily action (gluttony and lust), those that require no bodily action (vainglory and pride), those that have outside causes (avarice and anger), and those that are aroused from within (acedia and sadness).[289] Through these groupings, it becomes clear why his list includes anger after avarice and before sadness: because anger and avarice have a special connection in that they are both aroused from causes outside of the human being.[290] Therefore, it is clear that Cassian's list moves from outer to inner. The first two vices, gluttony and fornication, require bodily action and fault

[286] Évagre le Pontique, *Traité Pratique ou Le Moine,* Antoine et Claire Guillaumont (eds.), Paris: Les Éditions de Cerf, 1971, p.66.
[287] As stated in the previous chapter, it seems that the *Institutes* is drawing inspiration from multiple works of Evagrius, rather than just the *Praktikos* as has often been implied. The similarity in order of anger before sadness in *To Eulogios* supports this idea as well as the need to stop comparing the *Institutes* to the *Praktikos* alone of the Evagrian works.
[288] Gertrude Gillette, *Four Faces of Anger: Seneca, Evagrius Ponticus, Cassian, and Augustine*, Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2010, 51; that being said, it is important to note that there is an interrelationship among all the vices that means that they do not necessarily follow specifically one to another, cf. *Conf.* 22.3.8: "But avarice, vainglory, and pride and the whole multitude of the vices are joined together as one, and thus each vice, even if it begins to flourish in us by itself, furnishes the possibility of growth to others."
[289] *Conf.* 5.3
[290] Cassian also points out in *Conf.* 5.8.1 that "Although avarice and anger do not have the same nature (for the first in unnatural, but the second seem to have its origins within us), nonetheless they arise in similar fashion, since the causes that engender them usually come from without."

within the body. Then, avarice and anger are temptations of the soul caused by happenings outside. Acedia and sadness come from within and affect the soul.

Finally, vainglory and pride require no bodily action whatsoever and actually corrupt the virtues gained through the defeat of the previous six vices. "We fall into one of those six vices when we have been seduced by the one that comes before it, but we are in danger of falling into these two when we are victorious, and, indeed, particularly after triumphs."[291] Evagrius as well considers vainglory and pride to follow after the defeat of the others. In *Praktikos* 57, he describes "two peaceful states of the soul, one arising from natural seeds, the other resulting from the retreat of the demons. [...] accompanying the second you have vainglory and pride at the destruction of the other demons..." As well in *Skemmata* 57: "Among the thoughts, the thoughts of vainglory and pride arise after the defeat of the remaining thoughts."[292] While the first six follow on, one from the other, it is only after the monk has conquered the first six that he is then susceptible to the final two. Vainglory and pride come from a place within the soul that should be pure and is already filled with the opposing virtues of the first six vices. Therefore, they are even deeper in the inner man, deeper in the spiritual journey of the monk, and may even cause the inner man to hurt the outer man through an unnecessarily rigorous asceticism.

Marsili connects Cassian's understanding of natural and unnatural vices and the four kinds of operation to sections from Evagrius' *Skemmata,* which consists of 60-63 dense chapters. The first 39 are considered Gnostic chapters and the remaining are on thoughts – there are overlap quotations with *On Thoughts* leading to the ideas that the *Skemmata* was either notes to be expanded on later in the *Gnostikos* and *On Thoughts*, or else a reader's digest version of each work.[293] The *Skemmata* on thoughts gives a variety of insights into the

[291] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.10.4
[292] Evagrius explains a similar idea in *On Thts* 14 and *Prak* 31, when describing Vainglory.
[293] Harmless and Fitzgerald, "The Sapphire Light of the Mind: the *Skemmata* of Evagrius Ponticus," p.508.

relationship between men, thoughts, and demons. Marsili particularly points out three passages, connecting to *Conf.* 5.3, in this order:

> 56. "'Among thoughts, some are contrary to nature, others are according to nature.' [quoted by Marsili] Those deriving from concupiscibility and irascibility are contrary to nature; those from father or mother or wife or children are according to nature. [not quoted by Marsili]"
> 44. "'Among thoughts, some have no matter, some have little matter, and others have an abundance of matter.' [Marsili] Without matter are those deriving from original pride; with little matter are those deriving from fornication; with an abundance of matter those deriving from vainglory. [not quoted by Marsili]"
> 48. "'Among thoughts, some are begotten from the soul when it is moved, others arise from the external influence of the demons.'[Marsili]"[294]

It is clear from these passages that there is a certain similarity in Cassian's relationships between the vices and Evagrian teaching: natural and unnatural thoughts as well as the idea of certain ones needing matter.[295] However, especially in the unquoted sections of *Skemmata* 56 and 44, it is clear that Cassian develops these divisions differently. He does not divide natural and unnatural based on the parts of the soul, but rather based on the human person as a whole – body and soul. Also, Evagrius states that Vainglory requires "an abundance of matter", which is not found in Cassian. This "abundance of matter" is due to the fact that the monk being attacked by Vainglory finds his self-esteem by comparing himself to other monks and their progress. Cassian, however, focuses on the fact that Vainglory attacks the inner man – the part in which he is cultivating the virtues.

Kevin Corrigan has also offered an interpretation of *Skemmata* 44 in such a way distancing it from Cassian even more. He suggests that it shows a certain organization of the thoughts in Evagrius in which there are four sets of two – an idea not unfamiliar to Cassian, yet it is quite different. He suggests that the pairings are based on the much mattered, and little or no mattered:

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[294] Marsili, *Giovanni Cassiano ed Evagrio Pontico*, p.95-6.
[295] John Chrysostom also speaks about natural and unnatural vices, cf. *Hom on John* 74.3: "For of desires some are necessary, some natural, some neither the one nor the other."; also, cf. *Hom on Matt* 80.3; *Hom on John* 65.3; and *De virg.* 75.1 in John Chrysostom, *On Virginity; Against Remarriage*, Sally Rieger Shore (trans.), Lampeter: The Edwin Mellon Press, 1983.

a). pride: no matter
vainglory: much-mattered
b). *akedia*: little-mattered
anger: much-mattered
c). sadness: little-mattered
avarice: much-mattered
d). fornication: little-mattered
gluttony: much-mattered[296]

This is quite different from Cassian's four groups of two:

a). pride, vainglory } no bodily action, no external matter
b). a*cedia*, sadness } aroused from within
c). anger, avarice } outside causes
d). fornication, gluttony } bodily action, external matter

Not only are the pairs found in b) and c) different, but vainglory requires no matter, and fornication also requires and external instigation. The last passage Marsili mentions has little to do with *Conference* 5 as the demons are barely mentioned in this conference on the vices.[297] It is actually more reminiscent of *Conference* 1.19.1: "Above all, we should know what the three sources of our thoughts are: They come from God, from the devil, and from ourselves." However, Cassian here writes of any kind of thought, whereas Evagrius is only referring to evil thoughts.

Cassian has a further classification of the vices – carnal and spiritual. He acknowledges that "although the blessed Apostle has declared that all vices in general are carnal, [...] nonetheless we make a distinction based on a twofold division for the sake of a more refined understanding of their remedies and their natures."[298] The carnal vices are those which "pertain especially to the enjoyment and feelings of the flesh", and can even drag down "peaceful minds [...] to acquiesce in its will." Cassian gives this classification just after

[296] Corrigan, *Evagrius and Gregory*, 84; Corrigan goes on to connect Evagrius' understanding of the vices in this way to Plato's *Republic* 8-9, cf. Ibid, 85-6
[297] Devil or Lucifer: *Conf.* 5.6.2, 5.6.5-6, 5.7.2; evil spirits 5.16.4, 5.25.1-2
[298] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.4.4

he has explained that Gluttony and Fornication "require external matter to be consummated, and thus they operate through bodily action."[299] Therefore, he is specifically thinking of these vices as the carnal ones. In order to combat these, one must combine bodily discipline as well as spiritual, "since the mind's attentiveness is not enough in itself to check their urgings" unlike with anger, sadness, and the other passions.[300] The spiritual ones arise from the "soul alone" and "not only give no pleasure to the flesh but even inflict it with serious sufferings..."[301] In contrast to the carnal, which needs a "twofold cure", against the spiritual one only needs "the medicine of a simple heart".[302]

Therefore, Cassian has a clear and structured understanding of the eight vices and their relationship to each other. They are grouped and divided based on natural and unnatural, the four kinds of operation, a certain affinity between the first six as opposed the certain affinity between vainglory and pride, and, finally, carnal and spiritual. There are elements of Evagrian classifications within Cassian's understanding, but he develops them and lays them out with a clarity and consistency lacking in Evagrius. These changes provide the monks of Gaul with texts that are consistent with each other in order to bolster Cassian's efforts to provide a correct and *consistent* set of rules and disciplines in opposition to the inconsistency he sees among the monasteries of Gaul. Though he criticizes the inconsistency of practice over theology, Cassian is too methodical and disciplined in his efforts to leave his stress of flexibility only within his specific consistent system to abandon it after the first four books of the *Institutes*.

In addition, he not only provides a specific order and organization, but he also defines the vices in relation to his own ascetic theology. These definitions begin the building of his theological anthropology, cosmology, and eschatology. These are key areas in which

[299] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.4.1
[300] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.4.3
[301] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.4.5
[302] Ibid.

Cassian's theology differs from the Evagrian tradition. Therefore it is through the next section of this Chapter that those building blocks will become clear by turning to each of the individual principal vices, and finally ending with envy which is not a principal vice, yet is still important to both Cassian and Evagrius.

II.3: The Individual Vices

II.3.1: Gluttony

We know that Evagrius himself kept an extremely strict fast;[303] however, we do not know anything of Cassian's own struggle with gluttony. When specifically explaining the vice or thought of gluttony, Evagrius refers more to the physical temptations presented, i.e. temptations on feast days,[304] having too much concern for body health,[305] questioning the efficacy of fasting,[306] etc. Cassian's focus, however, is partly affected by his aim both to give more structured asceticism to the monks of Gaul as well as to explain that the exalted Egyptian practice must be tailored to Gallic climate, culture, and ability.[307] His explanations on the rules of eating, fasting, and hospitality are in the first four book of the *Institutes*, which are dedicated to the physical practices of the practical life. When speaking about these rules, Cassian, as well as Evagrius, gives allowance for when the monk is sick and may need more sustenance than normal. Ultimately, Cassian explains, "a uniform rule concerning the manner of fasting cannot easily be kept because not all bodies have the same strength, nor is it, like

[303] In the *Letter the Melania* 33, Evagrius states: "I am in the habit of taking nourishment once a day".
[304] cf. *Antirr.* 1.3, 1.25, 1.29, 1.30, 1.32, 1.36, 1.38-41, 1.45, 1.48, 1.60
[305] cf. *Antirr.* 1.3, 1.14, 1.15, 1.20, 1.21, 1.26, 1.34, 1.44, 1.48, 1.52, 1.56, 1.59, 1.65; *Eulogios* 13.12; *On Vices* 1.2; *Praktikos* 7
[306] cf. *Antirr.* 1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.11, 1.14, 1.17, 1.19-21, 1.32, 1.33, 1.42, 1.43, 1.55, 1.57, 1.68, 1.69; *On the eight thoughts* 1.14; *On Thoughts* 35; *On Vices* 1.2; *Exhortation 1 to Monks* 1, *Letter to Melania* 33; *Foundations* 5, 10; *Eulogios* 18.19
[307] He reports the different mealtime practices of different monastic communities in Egypt. Some require absolute silence during the meal, some rotate who is in charge of the meal each week, etc; cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 4.11-22

the other virtues, achieved by the firmness of mind alone";[308] therefore, "it is a very true and tested opinion of the fathers that the method of fasting and abstaining consists exclusively in the degree of frugality and in discipline".[309] However, in *Instititutes* book five, Cassian focuses specifically on the spiritual affects of the vice of gluttony. He is less focused on the physical temptations possible, like those found in Evagrius' *Antirrhetikos*, but rather uses his spiritual focus to begin introducing the eschatological dimension of his ascetic teachings.[310]

a. Food

At its core, gluttony is about excessively giving into the necessity of food and drink to sustain the body. Bread, oil, and water are the core diet of the monk. Other foods may be eaten as is necessary for the body, culture, and climate, but bread, oil, and water is the simplest fare. Cassian explains that there are three different types of gluttony in Conference Five. Neither is greater than the other, but each has a different spiritual consequence. The first type is the want to eat before the "lawful hour", from which "is born hatred for the monastery" and an "inability to endure it". This eventually causes the monk to give up on the ascetic life and flee the monastery. The second type is an insatiable hunger and the need to devour anything edible, from which "the burning pricks of lasciviousness and wanton desire are aroused." Finally, the third type is the desire for more refined and fancy foods, which allows the "inextricable bonds of avarice" to fasten "on the necks of its captives and never permits the monk to be rooted in Christ's utter deprivation."[311] All three are mentioned in some way by Evagrius, though he does not delineate three specific types of gluttony. Marsili points out the connection between Cassian and Evagrius concerning the want to eat before the lawful hour. In *Antirrhetikos* 1.7, Evagrius states: "Against the thought of gluttony that compels me to eat at the ninth hour". He also repeatedly refers to monks questioning the

[308] *Inst.* 5.5.1
[309] *Inst.* 5.8
[310] Cf. Catherine Chin, "Cassian, Cognition, and the Common Life", p.157
[311] *Conf.* 5.11.1-2

efficacy and necessity of fasting – therefore questioning the ascetic life.[312] Concerning Cassian's second kind of gluttony, Evagrius does refer to the want to have more than just the simplest fare, like wanting meat or fruit or vegetables on feast days. There is also a connection between satiety and fornication. The third again can be seen in Evagrius in the want for fancier, cooked, or more variety of food, however, he does not relate this to the poverty of Christ.

b. First Vice

Gluttony is the first vice in both Evagrius and Cassian's list of the eight principal vices, which may be a part of an established tradition.[313] While Evagrius never directly explains the order, the primacy of gluttony is most likely connected to the temptations of Adam and Jesus.[314] In *On Thoughts,* Evagrius states, "Of the demons who oppose the ascetic struggle, the first to arise for battle are those devoted to" gluttony, avarice, and vainglory.[315] He goes on to say that "for this reason, the Devil presented these three thoughts to the Saviour".[316] The first temptation was to turn stones into bread, which represents the temptations of gluttony. Therefore, gluttony has a Christological dimension for both monks because it is one of the temptations of Jesus.

Cassian connects the number of eight vices to the seven nations of Deuteronomy that must be conquered. In Conference Five, Cassian explains that while there are seven nations to be conquered, the first, gluttony is Egypt, which was to be forsaken, but not destroyed. "The reason why this is so is that with whatever spiritual ardour we may be inflamed and have entered the desert of the virtues, we can never rid ourselves of the proximity and the service of gluttony and of a certain daily contact with it."[317] It is important to note here another

[312] cf. note 29 above.
[313] *Traité Pratique ou Le Moine*, Antoine et Claire Guillaumont, p.90.
[314] Ibid.
[315] Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 1
[316] Ibid.
[317] Cassian, *Conferences* 5.19.1

reference to Egypt not in direct connection to gluttony itself, but rather to the human being. In Conference Three, on the renunciations, Cassian explains that: "Bodily renunciation and removal from Egypt, as it were, will be of no value to us, therefore, if we have been unable to obtain at the same time the renunciation of heart which is more sublime and more beneficial."[318] The "removal from Egypt" through Moses is a common figurative theme in early Christian thought; however, it is important to see that Egypt is the symbol of the human state for Cassian – something that can be removed and controlled, but a threat that is never destroyed, only contained. The return to Egypt is the opposite of the purpose of the ascetic journey and something that should not happen for one who has already given bodily renunciation.

In Conference Five, Cassian goes on to strengthen further his definition of gluttony and its vital role in the definition of humanity when he says, "we shall never be able to cut off the practice of gluttony. For we cannot, however much progress we make, cease to be what we were born to be."[319] Even those who are "perfect", who have conquered all the other passions, "nonetheless, they cannot be freed from concern for their daily fare and from the baking of their yearly supply of bread."[320] Augustine, as well, notes in the *Confessions*, that "I strive daily against my appetite for food and drink. For it is not the kind of appetite I am able to deal with by cutting it off once and for all, and thereafter not touching it, as I was able to do with fornication."[321] Because the human being is made up of both body and soul, the body and soul must be sustained and nourished; therefore, one can never truly be past the vice of gluttony because he will come up against it every time he eats, drinks, falls ill, or sustains the necessities of the body in this life.

[318] Cassian, *Conf.* 3.7.7
[319] Ibid, 5.19.4
[320] Ibid.
[321] Augustine, *Confessions* 10.31.47

Evagrius, in *On the Eight Thoughts*, equates gluttony to Amalek: "'Amalek was the first of the nations' and gluttony is the first of the passions" and "An extension of hands put Amalek to flight, and the raising of practical works subdues the passions of the flesh."[322] However, the two biblical references made are from Numbers 24:20 and Exodus 17:11, respectively. Cassian does not mention either of these references or Amalek in reference to gluttony, but rather firmly connects gluttony to Egypt – the nation the Israelites left before coming up against Amalek. Also, it is a nation "put to flight" and not one of the seven nations Cassian mentions from Deuteronomy. Therefore, Cassian has clearly made his own connection and development of gluttony not found in Evagrius.[323]

Another symbol for gluttony in Cassian's Conference Five is an eagle. He uses this image just after he explains gluttony's connection to Egypt and how it will never truly be destroyed, but rather subdued or forsaken. He likens gluttony to an eagle that soars so high, yet must dip down to the earth in order to eat, which shows "that the spirit of gluttony, unlike that of the other vices, cannot be altogether cut off or completely destroyed, but its pricks and its superfluous desires can only be restrained and moderated through a virtuous mind."[324] Again Cassian makes it clear that gluttony cannot be destroyed like the other vices, and it is therefore unique among them. This image also can be found in Evagrius, but not in the same way as in Cassian. In *On the Eight Thoughts* 1.14, Evagrius states that "the prayer of one who fasts is like a young eagle soaring upwards, whereas that of a drunkard is born downwards under the weight of satiety." While the eagle imagery is connected to fasting, it is referring to the *prayer* of one who fasts. However, we see a clearer connection in this Evagrian work to Cassian's gluttony-eagle image not in a definition of gluttony, but of avarice: "The monk free of possessions is like a high-soaring eagle who swoops down upon food whenever need

[322] Evagrius, *On the Eight Thoughts*, 1.3 and 1.29, respectively.
[323] However, it is interesting that this is found in the only Evagrian work that has the same order of the vices as Cassian. Here we find a piece of the difficult puzzle concerning Cassian's relationship to Evagrius, whether his dependence is more through a literary or oral influence.
[324] Cassian, *Conferences* 5.20

requires."[325] While Evagrius is actually using the image of an eagle to describe one free of avarice, he still gives the image of coming down for food. Cassian seems to have blended the two ideas into one which works within his own definition of gluttony.

Evagrius also references eagle imagery in two other works. In *On Prayer*, he uses it to depict prayer: "Pray as is fitting and without trouble, practise psalmody with understanding and harmony, and you will be like a young eagle soaring in the heights."[326] Then, in *Thirty-Three Chapters*, Evagrius, providing an exegesis of Proverbs 30:17, says that "the 'young of eagles' are the holy power entrusted with casting down the impure beings."[327] Therefore, for Evagrius, the prevailing image for which the eagle is used is actually prayer or the holy powers that are entrusted with casting down demons – those whom the ascetic strives to be like.[328] Clearly Cassian is making deliberate choices concerning the Evagrian ideas he has learned or incorporates. His image of an eagle pertains to gluttony, whereas Evagrius' generally pertains to prayer.

c. "Common to humanity"

Cassian's understanding of gluttony's presence in the temptation of Jesus—and Adam—holds a special importance not found in Evagrius. It is an essential piece of Cassian's definition of what it is to be human, tied in specifically with his understanding of Creation and the person of Christ. This vice, along with vainglory/avarice[329] and pride, are the ones that corrupted Adam and Eve, and, therefore, those with which the Devil tempted Jesus. While Evagrius also relates the importance of gluttony in the tempting of Jesus, he does not place as much emphasis on that of Adam and Eve as Cassian does. In *On the Eight Thoughts*

[325] Evagrius, *On the Eight Thoughts* 3.5
[326] Evagrius, *On Prayer* 82
[327] Evagrius, *Thirty-three Chapters* 29
[328] Irénée Hausherr uses the passage from *33 Chapters* to explain the idea from *On Prayer* 113 that "Through true prayer a monk becomes equal to the angels...", which also provides a further meaning to the *On Prayer* 82 passage. cf. *Les leçons d'un contemplatif: le Traité de l'oraison d'Évagre le Pontique*, Paris: Beauchesne, 1960, p.115.
[329] See the section on Christology for more on the second vice.

he alludes to it by saying, "A desire for food gave birth to disobedience and a sweet taste expelled from paradise."[330] While Evagrius only makes references to the Creation and Fall story in Genesis and prefers his own development of Origen's understanding of Creation, Cassian fully supports the more acceptable story from Genesis. For the younger monk, the beginning of the corruption of men is placed firmly in the vice of gluttony, which is made clear in Conference Twenty-Three, where Cassian talks about the fall in terms of a transaction between the serpent and Adam. Concerning Adam's part in it, Cassian says "by eating the unlawful food he delivered over all his offspring, now led astray, to the yoke of perpetual slavery" and "Upon eating of the forbidden tree he received the price of his freedom from the serpent and, abandoning his natural freedom, he chose to surrender himself in perpetual slavery to him from whom he had obtained the deadly price of the forbidden fruit."[331] Cassian does not mention vainglory or pride here, and he does not focus on the thought or desire within Adam, but rather his focus is on the act of eating. In that action – "by eating the unlawful fruit" and "upon eating of the forbidden tree" – Adam is condemned.

Cassian also uses gluttony to distinguish between the angels that fell to become demons and Adam and Eve who caused the corruption of humanity. As stated previously, Gluttony is a vice that requires bodily action as well as some external object: "the first Adam would not have been able to be deceived by gluttony had he not had something to eat and immediately and lawlessly misused it, nor was the second [Christ] tempted without the enticement of some substance..."[332] The understanding that the "natural" vices are those which "misuse" something natural to human beings is also in *On Thoughts.* Evagrius says that demons tempt the human person in two ways: as a human being and as an irrational animal.[333] Those that tempt us an animal, "move our irascibility and concupiscibility in a

[330] Evagrius, *On the eight thoughts* 1.10
[331] *Conf.* 23.12.2
[332] Conf 5.4.1-2
[333] Also cf. *Skemmata* 40.

manner contrary to nature".[334] For Evagrius, gluttony is a product of concupiscibility being moved contrary to nature. Cassian also writes about the tripartite soul, although not until the very last Conference.[335] He also states that gluttony, along with "fornication, avarice, covetousness, and harmful and earthly desires" is a product of the "concupiscible portion".[336] However, Cassian does not mention this tripartite understanding of the soul in his explicit explanations of gluttony itself.

Rather, in order to make the importance of gluttony in the definition of humanity even clearer, he explains that the angels who fell did not have an external instigation nor did they have a body that could feel the pangs of gluttony that Adam did:

> "For a spiritual substance which is free of the flesh's resistance has no excuse for an evil choice arising in itself, and thus there is no pardon for its wickedness, because it has not been provoked to sin from without, as we are, by any assault of the flesh, but is inflamed by the vice of an evil will (*malae voluntatis*) alone. Therefore its sin is unpardonable and its disease irremediable. Just as it succumbs without the involvement of any earthly matter, so it cannot obtain forgiveness or a place of repentance. It is clear from these facts that this struggle of flesh and spirit against one another which rages in us is not only not bad but is even of great benefit to us."[337]

The first vice Adam was tempted with was gluttony, which then opened him up to the other two vices the Devil tempted him with, vainglory and pride. The angels, however, did not have an earthly body that could have been affected by such a vice, and therefore their wickedness is due "to an evil will (*voluntatis*) alone."

As the first vice, it is also the gateway to the spiritual battle – just as it was the gateway to corruption for Adam, Christ showed it is the gateway to salvation. It is only through the control of gluttony that one is able to progress to the more difficult vices and

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[334] Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 18.
[335] Columba Stewart suggests that "though it underlies much of his reflection on the power of desire (*concuspiscentia*) and anger, the model as such does not play the explicit role in his own teaching that it did for Evagrius." cf. Stewart, "John Cassian's Schema", p.211. The tripartite soul is originally a Platonic idea beginning in Plato's *Republic*. The presence of this pagan philosophical idea is not surprising in early Christianity. Much work has been done on the influence of pagan philosophy on Christianity. cf. Richard Sorabji, *Emotions and Peace of Mind*; Simo Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosphy*; Mark Edwards, *Image, Word and God in the Early Christian Centuries*, to name only a few excellent sources.
[336] Cassian, *Conf.* 24.15.4
[337] Conf. 4.14

adversaries: “For it is impossible for a full stomach to undertake the struggles of the iner man, nor is it right for someone to be made trial of by more violent battles if he can be overcome in a less important conflict.”[338] Gluttony is “common to humanity” – meaning that it doesn’t matter how virtuous or vicious a man may be, he will be tempted by gluttony. In a way, it is easier to control gluttony in physical and bodily abstinence. Controlling one’s food and water and daily work is easier to control than one’s thoughts. However, gluttony necessitates integrity of the inner man as well as the outer, through bodily abstinence, in order to control it. This is why Paul states “I do not fight as one beating against the air. But I chastise my body and subject it to servitude.”[339] One must be able to control the impulses of the outer man before he has a hope of controlling and destroying the wicked impulses of the inner man. Then, he is able to move on to the more serious and difficult battles. Cassian explains that once one has control of gluttony, then “we shall be able to say to him: ‘Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spirits of evil in heavenly places.’”[340]

Gluttony is the first vice because it is common to humanity. It was present in the corruption of Adam – present in the body before the Fall.[341] Then, as in the Fall, man is able to take on the more difficult and grievous temptations, ending in Pride[342], which is the epitome of turning away and voluntarily separating oneself from God. Therefore, on the journey to salvation, one *must* start with Gluttony in order to progress to the more difficult. For the novice, it is the gateway to more difficult battles; for the experienced monk, it is the gateway for keeping those more difficult, already destroyed vices in check: “Gluttony is not to be overcome only on account of itself—namely, lest it ruin us by a burdensome surfeit—

[338] *Inst.* 5.13
[339] 1 Cor 9:26-7; cf. *Inst* 5.18.1
[340] *Inst.* 5.19.2; cf. Eph 3:16-17
[341] As opposed to Lust, which only becomes present *after* the corruption in the Fall.
[342] Interestingly, in *Conference* 7.19.2, Cassian explains that a monk could never be struggling with Gluttony and Pride at the same time: no one “can...at the same time be puffed up by the swelling haughtiness of spiritual pride and fall into the humiliation of carnal gluttony.”

more merely lest it inflame us with the fire of carnal desire, but also lest it enslave us to wrath and rage and sadness and every other passion."[343] Gluttony is as simple as it is complex for Cassian. It is more easily controllable than the other vices, but not conquerable like they are. It is the gateway to corruption, but it is also the gateway to salvation. In fact, in contrast to the demons, Gluttony is the key to humanity's ability for salvation.

II.3.2: Fornication

a. Understanding Fornication

Fornication is the second vice in the Cassian-Evagrian list of eight principal vices. Its denial is an essential piece of what it means to be a monk. Both monks teach that it is not only the physical act of fornication or the physical response, but also lascivious thoughts – even those not acted upon – that the monk must eradicate. Therefore there is a clear emphasis on the avoidance of women, thinking about women, and even a caution in contemplating or hearing about holy women from Scripture.[344] Women are not wholly evil for Cassian and he even provides examples of virtuous women that the male monks can learn from.[345] Generally, his references to women in connection to the vice of fornication tend to concern thoughts, images, memories and dreams. However, he does explain in *Institutes* Book 4 that familiarity with women is an offense requiring blows, which is one of the more serious punishments in the cenobium.[346] Importantly, this is a book meant for those in the beginning of their monastic journey, and Cassian recommends a more complete departure from the world for these young monks so that they do not get into a dangerous situation when they are not yet

[343] *Conf.* 22.3.7
[344] For the caution concerning Scriptural passages on holy women, cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 6.13.1, & 6.19 and *Conf* 19.12.3 & 19.16.3; for Cassian's mentions of women in connection to Fornication, cf. *Inst.* 4.16.3, 6.12, 7.11, and *Conf* 1.20.5, 5.11.4, 7.24.3-6, 8.16.3, 12.7.3-4, 13.5.2, 15.10, 19.12.3, 19.16.3, 20.9.2, 21.33.2, & 24.17.3; for Evagrius', cf. *On the eight thoughts* 2.2, 2.6, 2.8, 2.9-10, 2.14, 2.17-19; *Antirrhetikos* 2.1, 2.6, 2.15, 2.32, 2.35-37, 2.49; *Praktikos* 54; *To monks* 83; *To the virgin* 24; *On Thoughts* 16, 27, & 29
[345] cf. *Conf.* 18.14
[346] Cf. *Inst.* 4.16.3

strong enough in virtue to conquer it. It is clear from his references to women in connection to Fornication that he is speaking to an audience of male monks.[347] He never once gives any suggestion that nuns or virgins may be included in his audience.[348]

Because of his secluded audience, in describing fornication, Cassian uses examples of actual encounters with women less than thoughts or memories. In *Institutes* 6, on fornication, he quotes Basil of Caesarea and expands on it: "'I do not know woman, but I am not a virgin.' Well indeed did he understand that the incorruption of the flesh consists not so much in abstaining from woman as it does in integrity of heart..."[349] Evagrius, on the other hand, specifically uses examples of the temptations of women in his explanations of fornication itself. In *On the Eight Thoughts* and *Antirrhetikos*, references to women abound. He even includes a rather vivid explanation of their flirtations and traps in *On the Eight Thoughts* 2.8. He also specifically mentions married women a few times – perhaps in reference to his own struggle with fornication in Constantinople.

Both monks warn against the power of thoughts, images, memories, or dreams of a woman or her form; however, both monks also emphasize that it is not just the body that is involved in the vice of fornication, but the soul as well. The demons especially use these weapons against the monk in the battle with fornication. They use the outer indications of the body, such as if the monk "has let himself be struck by the shaft of wanton desire, or if they see that his flesh has been stirred or even that he has not sighed as he should have over the lewdness of an impure suggestion, then they understand that the dart of wanton desire has been fixed in the depths of his soul."[350] Like Gluttony, fornication is a natural[351] and carnal

[347] cf. *Inst.* 7.11 (avarice can drive a monk to store his money with women and open him to other vices); *Conf.*
[348] Interestingly, Evagrius does warn holy women concerning the company of other women of lower morals in *To the virgin* 24.
[349] *Inst.* 6.19
[350] *Conf.* 7.15.2
[351] In *Inst.* 7.3.1, to illustrate that Avarice is an unnatural vice, he contrasts it with Fornication, since even "simple movements" can be seen in boys, small children, and infants. "Although, to be sure, they do not have the beginnings of any wantonness in them, they demonstrate that they have movements of the flesh by a natural incitement."

vice that requires both the discipline of the body and the integrity of the soul for victory over it. In this way, Cassian explains that it is a twofold vice a twofold cure – meaning work from both body and soul.[352] This idea is also found in Evagrius, *To Eulogios* 18: "Now consider there are two types of fornication, coupled together yet distinct, that of the body and that of the spirit..." Cassian does not consider them distinct as Evagrius does, however, it is clear that both consider Fornication to affect both body and soul since there are the physical responses, but also the thoughts and desires within the heart, soul, and mind.

Cassian further defines fornication in Conference Five, when he explains that there are three kinds of this vice that affects body and soul based on the Apostle's words in Colossians 3:5: "Put to death your members here on earth: fornication, impurity, and wantonness..."[353] The first two are intercourse and masturbation, both physical responses to the burning of this vice. The third "is that which is conceived in the soul and in the mind" through lascivious thoughts – even those not acted upon. For Cassian's monastic audience, the first is eradicated before entrance to the monastery, the second within in the very beginnings of the ascetic journey, and the third is the one that takes the longest time to battle – and which may never be conquered. Though both Evagrius and Cassian root fornication in both body and soul, Cassian is more concerned with the inner purification of this vice and less with the physical ways of conquering, whereas Evagrius emphasizes the restriction of water or diet in order to battle fornication.[354]

b. Abstinence vs. Chastity

One of the signs that one is still contending with fornication is nocturnal emissions. While this may seem like an emphasis on the physical, Cassian actually approaches nocturnal emissions as a signal to the state of the soul concerning fornication and chastity. He deals

[352] *Conf.* 5.4.6
[353] cf. *Conf* 5.11.4-5
[354] cf. *Praktikos* 17 and *To Monks* 102 for the restriction of water; also cf. Colleen McCluskey, "Lust and Chastity", in *Virtues and their Vices*, Kevin Tempe & Craig A. Boyd (eds.), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, p.117

with it more in the later *Conferences* for those monks who are further along their ascetic journey. Importantly, Cassian stresses that there is a clear difference between abstinence and chastity – as well as different levels of chastity itself. To punctuate this point, Cassian states that the pagan philosophers who took a vow of chastity didn't participate in the same kind of chastity as Christian monks.[355] They may have participated in abstinence, but Socrates himself admits to continual unchaste thoughts. In addition, while eunuchs may not have any disturbance of the flesh, "they lack neither the seething emotions of the flesh nor the effects of lust but only the power of generation."[356] Nocturnal emissions would be very concerning for a group of male ascetics. Evagrius suggests limiting water intake to prevent against this.[357] Cassian mentions this suggestion of limiting water in Conference Twelve: "in order that the law of the body conform with the law of the mind, an excessive drinking even of water itself should be curbed"; however, his focus remains on the inner purity in nurturing chastity – this physical restriction may help bring the body and mind to the same page, but the focus is on the inner man:

> "...perfect chastity is distinguished from the toilsome rudiments of abstinence by its perpetual tranquillity. For this is the consummation of true chastity, which does not fight the movements of carnal lust but detests them with utter horror, maintaining a constant and inviolable purity for itself."[358]

[355] cf. *Conf* 13.5.3: "Socrates, the most famous of them, did not blush to confess this about himself, as they themselves assert. For one time a certain expert in physiognomy saw him and said: ομματα παιδεραστοι—that is: These are the eyes of a corruptor of boys. When his disciples rushed upon the man, wanting to avenge the insult to their teacher, it is said that he restrained their anger with these words: παυσασθε, εταιροι. Ειμι γαρ, επεχω δε—that is: Calm yourselves, my friends. For I am such, but I contain myself. It is very clear, then, not only from our assertion but even from their own say-so that they only repressed actual immoral behaviour—that is, wicked intercourse—by main force, but that desire for and delight in this passion had not been cut from their hearts."
[356] *Conf.* 12.10.3
[357] cf. *Praktikos* 17; *To Monks* 102
[358] *Conf.* 12.11.1

The most important thing in the struggle against the vice of fornication is to always be aware of its possibility. Just because a monk may have stopped having lustful thoughts or nocturnal emissions, does not necessarily mean he has conquered this vice.[359]

However, unlike Gluttony, it is possible to conquer and destroy fornication – though very few are able to do so.[360] Cassian stresses that the rigors of the ascetic life are crucial for conquering this vice, but they alone cannot bring one to perfect chastity – it is through proving oneself in ascetic practice that a monk may "deserve to be freed from the assault of the flesh and from the domination of the ruling vices, thanks to the divine gift."[361] One particular monk who has obtained this level of chastity through grace is Abba Serenus; however, this level of purity is set aside from Cassian's delineation of the six degrees of chastity (which all correspond to the third type of fornication which is in thoughts). This essentially seventh level is such that "what was granted in particular to [Serenus] by the graciousness of the divine gift cannot be proposed as a kind of general precept—namely, that our mind would be so stamped with the purity of chastity that even the natural movement of the flesh would have died and one would not produce any disgusting fluid at all."[362] Here, Cassian makes his understanding of fornication and chastity abundantly clear. Fornication is a natural vice, connected to the "natural movement of the flesh" and while the body and soul must be placed under ascetic rigour, this battle is a long and difficult one. It is only through reaching a special level of chastity – through divine grace – that one can be completely rid of any physical response to lust. In particular, he is addressing the anxiety of the one who can control his thoughts while awake, but still suffers from nocturnal emissions at night, when he is not in conscious control. Cassian is essentially saying that nightly responses are natural; by no means should they be brushed off or ignored, but rather they are a signal that the battle

[359] cf. the story of the blessed Paphnutius who thought he had conquered lust until he was burned on the hand and an angel came to him in a dream telling him he still had fornication in his heart, *Conf.* 15.10.1-4
[360] cf. *Inst.* 6.1; *Conf.* 5.19.3, 12.3.1, 12.3.3, 12.7.6, & 12.8.1
[361] *Conf.* 12.4.2
[362] *Conf.* 12.7.6

with fornication is not over – a reminder of sorts for the monk to not become prideful and think he has reached a level that can only be reached through the grace of God and by very few. Boniface Ramsey points out that chastity for Cassian is not the "superlative virtue" as it is in Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, or Jerome, but rather is "at best an indication of and an accompaniment to that perfection which may be characterized as love or inner tranquillity or purity of heart."[363]

c. *Cassian's Spiritual Meanings of Fornication*

In Conference Fourteen, "On Spiritual Knowledge", Cassian relates that there are levels of meaning for fornication based on one's level of knowledge. He explains that Exodus 20:14, "*non fornicaberis*" ("You shall not commit fornication"), is like "all heavenly commands" in that they "are shaped for the whole human race according to the measure of our condition".[364] Therefore, for one "still entangled in the passions of fleshly impurity" it is understood according to the letter and refers to the traditional, physical understanding of fornication. However, if one has passed this point and conquered the pangs of physical desire, there are four more levels to be wary of. The first is to reject idolatry and paganism, including "the observance of auguries and omens and of all signs and days and times".[365] Second is to reject the "superstitions of the law and of Judaism", which is related to the serpent corrupting Eve by Paul in 2 Cor 11:3.[366] Third is to beware of the "adultery of heretical teaching", and fourth, which is the most "subtle", is "the vice of fornication which consists in wandering thoughts, for every thought that is not only wicked but even idle and that to some degree departs from God is considered the most impure fornication by the perfect man."[367]

[363] John Cassian, *Conferences*, Boniface Ramsey (trans.), p.431. Chastity's connection to purity heart will be dealt with in the chapter on the Contemplative Life.
[364] Cassian, *Conf.* 14.11.1-2
[365] Sinkecwicz suggests that Evagrius explains the spiritual kind of fornication "as a kind of idolatry" in *To Eulogios* 18.19, cf. *Evagrius of Pontus*, p.22
[366] cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 14.11.3-4
[367] Cassian, *Conf.* 14.11.5

Because Cassian uses the lead in, *scriptum est in lege* ("It is written in the law"), before quoting *non fornicaberis*, and he seems to be pointing to Exodus 20:14 – as Boniface Ramsey has referenced in his edition; however, when Cassian quotes it in Conference Eight, he uses *adulterabis* – which is the more common word for this passage.[368] In Hosea 3:3, one finds *non fornicaberis*, and the reference to Hosea may actually be at the forefront of Cassian's mind as well as *non adulterabis* from Exodus. In the book of Hosea, the people of Israel have become distracted and have wandered away from God. They have turned to both idolatry and fornication. The prophet Hosea works to warn the Israelites of the necessity of returning to God. In further support of the connection between Hosea and this understanding of fornication, when explaining the first spiritual understanding of fornication (idolatry and paganism), he uses Hosea 4:12: *spiritus fornicationis decepit eos et fornicati sunt a deo suo* ("The spirit of fornication has deceived them, and they went fornicating away from their God.") Again fornication is a separation or movement away from God – a distraction, a deception, by which the faithful are led astray.

While it is clear that Cassian is developing his understanding of this vice, his focus in this passage is not directly on fornication, but rather the different levels of understanding of Scripture based on one's level of spiritual knowledge, and the separation from God that occurs in wandering thoughts. Just after Nesteros explains these different meanings for Exodus 20:14, Cassian – not Germanus as is usual – replies that he particularly struggles with his thoughts wandering to the "silly fables and narratives of wars" from his childhood education.[369] However, the important aspect of fornication that is found in this passage is that it inherently includes a separation from God—whether that separation is at the fleshly level—since fornication is a product of the Fall and is a signal of humanity's state of separation from God—or at the spiritual level ranging from paganism to Judaism, then heresy to wandering

[368] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.25.4
[369] Cassian, *Conf.* 14.12

thoughts. It is fitting that he uses *non fornicaberis* to illustrate his point. In Conference One, "On the Goal of the Monk", Abba Moses tells Cassian and Germanus that the mind "should judge as *fornicatio* even a moment's separation from the contemplation of Christ."[370] This is connected to Cassian's stress that Christ came in the "likeness of sinful flesh" which did not contain the pangs of fornication. To be connected to Christ, one must get rid of this dividing wall of fornication. As one acquires spiritual knowledge, he conquers this separation becoming closer to God, working towards obtaining chastity by the grace of God.[371]

Evagrius does not use Exodus 20:14 or the passages from Hosea in his explanations of fornication. In fact, he does not put this same level of stress on separation in relation the definition of fornication as Cassian does. This difference is in line with each monk's understanding of Creation and the Fall. For Evagrius, the separation happens before the material world, before vice, and is the definition of all rational beings, not just humans. For Cassian, the vices, gluttony, avarice/vainglory, and pride, were present *in* the Fall. They were able to tempt and affect the pre-fallen *man* – united body and soul. Fornication is a secondary vice, a product of the original corruption and is a vital part of the definition of fallen humanity in that it illustrates the separation from God.

d. *Fornication and the corruption of humanity*

Therefore, this is a vital aspect of Cassian's understanding of fornication that is not rooted in Evagrius. In this section, Cassian will not be compared to Evagrius, but rather another of Cassian's influential contemporaries, Augustine. This point of comparison allows for a clearer understanding of fornication according to Cassian. Through the work of Boniface Ramsey and Augustine Casiday, it is clear that Cassian is a "discriminating student"

[370] Cassian, *Conf.* 1.13.1
[371] Evagrius states that the "demon of fornication, unless it sets thoughts in motion, doesn't hinder knowledge of God", cf. *Praktikos* 51.

of both Augustine and Evagrius.[372] For Evagrius, all the vices are a product of the original movement which necessitated a second material creation – it is important to understand that the vices are a part of the material creation that came *after* the movement away from God. For Augustine, the Fall and separation from the original state of connection to God came initially through Pride,[373] and thereafter, the condition of *originale peccatum* is passed down through the physical expression of lust. Dominic Keech, in his analysis of Cassian's use of Romans 8:3 in his Christology, faults Cassian for his lack of focus on lust in explaining the corruption of humanity.[374] However, the reason for this can be found in Cassian's understanding of gluttony and fornication in reference to Creation, the Fall and salvation.

For Cassian, fornication is not the defining characteristic of a corrupt, fallen humanity – that particular prize goes to gluttony. Cassian considers both gluttony and fornication to be "common to humanity", using the Apostle's words in *Institutes* 5.16.2 in reference to fornication and again at 5.19.2 in reference to gluttony.[375] However, fornication only exists because of gluttony. Gluttony is the doorway to corruption in Adam and Eve, and the doorway to salvation in Jesus Christ. The Devil tempted Jesus with gluttony, not fornication, because "one who had conquered gluttony could not be tempted by fornication, which proceeds from the former's repletion and from its root. Even the first Adam would not have been struck by this if he had not been deceived by the enticements of the devil and contracted the passion which generates it."[376] In Conference Five, Cassian explains that just as Adam "was fashioned of untilled and untouched earth, the latter [Jesus] was born of the Virgin

[372] Augustine Casiday, "*Apatheia* and Sexuality in Augustine and Cassian", *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 45, no. 4, 2001, p.392; also cf. Boniface Ramsey, "John Cassian: a student of Augustine", *Cistercian Studies Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 1, 1993, pp.5-15.
[373] cf. Augustine, *De Gen. ad. Litt.* 11.5.7; and *De Civ. Dei* 14.13
[374] cf. Dominic Keech, "John Cassian and the Christology of Romans 8:3", *Vigiliae Christianae* 64, no. 3, Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp.280-299.
[375] *Inst.* 5.16.2: "And what is said to those among whom fornication is mentioned will be said to us by the blessed Apostle: 'No trial has seized you except what is common to humanity'."; and *Inst.* 5.19.2: "For otherwise we shall never be able to contend with them, having been overcome inthe fleshly conflict and been defeated in the battle with our belly, and justifiably will the Apostle say to us reproachfully: 'No trial has seized you except what is common to humanity.'"; the Scriptural reference is from 1 Cor 10:13.
[376] *Conf.* 5.3

Mary."[377] He draws a parallel between the two that neither one came from a sexual union of any kind. As already explained, fornication has the ability to be eradicated – it may be extremely difficult and only possible for a few – but it is possible. Gluttony cannot be destroyed or eradicated; it will always be a temptation for the human being. Every time one eats or drinks, he is tempted by gluttony. It is through the control of gluttony that a monk is able to destroy fornication. In fact, it is through the control of gluttony that all the vices are able to be destroyed. Gluttony remains throughout the human experience on earth and is therefore *the* defining characteristic of a fallen and corrupt humanity; whereas fornication represents the separation from God in the current state of humanity.

However, while fornication is not the cause of corruption in the beginning, Cassian does connect it to a certain amount of corruption in explaining Genesis 6:2. He explains that angels could not have carnal relations with human women because, first of all, they are of a spiritual substance and the two do not mix; second, there no contemporary evidence for it; and third, if the demons (fallen angels) had the ability to do it, they would.[378] Therefore, this is clearly in reference to the sons of Seth mingling with the daughters of Cain. The sons of Seth retained much of the natural knowledge of Adam and "the holiness of [their] ancestors and forefathers".[379] They were "not at all infected by the sacrileges and malice of the wicked progeny that retained in itself the seed of impiousness as if by ancestral tradition."[380] Therefore, the sons of Seth were called "angels of God" or "sons of God on account of their blessedness." There was a "holy and beneficial division" between the progeny of Seth and that of Cain until the sons of God (those of Seth's progeny) saw the daughters of Cain and "*desiderio...succensi*" (having been set on fire with desire), they took them as wives.[381] Through this act, Cassian says that Psalm 82:6-7 is directed at them: "I have said: You are

[377] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.6.2
[378] cf. *Conf.* 8.21.1
[379] *Conf.* 8.21.3
[380] Ibid.
[381] *Conf.* 8.21.4

gods, and you are all sons of the Most High. But you shall die like human beings, and you shall fall like one of the princes."[382] He goes on to explain, that before this union, Adam's natural knowledge from before the Fall was passed on *certa ratione* to the progeny of Seth; however, after the union, they became corrupted and the law needed to be written down since it was no longer a part of natural knowledge.

Augustine also reinterprets Genesis 6:2 to be concerning the sons of Seth and daughters of Cain. He states: "...out of [Adam's] condemned seed, as out of one mass handed over to merited damnation, God made some vessels of wrath to dishonour and others vessels of mercy to honor".[383] While there are two races – one of wrath and dishonour (Cain's descendants) and one of mercy and honor (Seth's descendants), Augustine emphasizes that all are from the "condemned seed" of Adam. His focus even in explaining the mingling of the two cities is on the original corruption in the Fall. Cassian does not feel the need to reiterate the condemnation of the entire human race in his explanation. Like Cassian, Augustine also mentions Psalm 82:6, "I have said: You are gods, and you are all sons of the Most High" in order to explain how men are rightly called "sons of God" or "angels of God".[384] He states that the corruption that came through this union happened because "when they were captivated by the daughters of men, they adopted the manners of the earthly to win them as their brides, and forsook the godly ways they had followed in their own holy society."[385]

While the two theologians have similar interpretations of Genesis 6:2, they each develop their explanations in their own way. Augustine is focused on explaining the two cities, understanding good and evil, as well the human will in his interpretation of Gen 6:2; whereas, Cassian is explaining the limitations of the spiritual beings as well as the need for the law to be written down. However, what is important about this section in Cassian, is that

[382] Ibid.
[383] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 15.21
[384] cf. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 15.22
[385] Ibid.

there is a certain amount of corruption caused *libidinis instigatione* (by the instigation of wantonness) causing a loss of natural knowledge and necessitating the written law.[386] However, fornication and its effects are a consequence of the Fall which happened through gluttony, avarice/vainglory, and pride. This corruption through fornication, therefore, is a secondary corruption and not the definition of fallen humanity. Peter Brown notes that the other vices "lay deeper in [the monk's] identity than did sexual desire" for Cassian, and that "Augustine, by contrast, had placed sexuality irremovably at the center of the human person." Therefore, for Cassian, impure thoughts and sexual dreams are an indication of deeper, more corruptive vices, where for Augustine, sexuality "echoed in the body the one unalterable consequence of mankind's first sin."[387]

Cassian's fornication has similarities to Evagrius', yet has an important spiritual dimension not present in the Egyptian's works. Fornication plays a key role in understanding the definition of humanity, especially in comparison to gluttony within Cassian's works. It also plays a key role in situating his theology within the context of his contemporaries. Although certain aspects of his theology are closer to Augustine's than Evagrius', he works own particular understanding into a coherent theology tied in closely with his understanding of the ascetic life. The separation that fornication characterizes is an important aspect of the ascetic journey – it is an aspect the monk is working to eliminate, but which can only be eliminated through the grace of God. Fornication sheds light on Cassian's creation, anthropology, stress on the importance of grace, as well as the journey towards salvation.

[386] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.21.9
[387] Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1988, 422

II.3.3: Avarice

Avaritia, or more commonly, *philargyria* "love of silver", is often translated as "greed", but it is so much more than greed. It has a long history before Evagrius and Cassian, but it takes on a new life in their writings, for "one finds little compromise with the realities of a lay community in their conception of avarice".[388] Richard Newhauser, in his excellent survey of the development of this vice, notes that while Evagrius and Cassian are influenced by those who came before them including the Cappadocians and John Chrysostom, because their audience has shifted to the ascetic community, their understanding and definitions concerning possessions are much stricter. The renunciation of the world is a vital piece of the asceticism propitiated by both Evagrius and Cassian – avarice corrupts that renunciation. In fact, "the ascetic rigors which Evagrius recommends for members of the Egyptian communities could not sustain such a disruption as that caused by avarice."[389]

a. Renunciation

Avarice inside the monastery is primarily rooted in the complete renunciation of worldly things including all possessions. While it is most often illustrated and spoken of in terms of money, within the walls of the cenobium, where there is little actual money, the vice of avarice extends to clothing, food, and supplies. For Evagrius, it is a "varied and ingenious" foe that is able to play both sides of a monk's heart.[390] It is able to distract him from work and prayer bringing upon him a kind of miserly depression, or it can also influence him to work even harder – again avoiding prayer, but this time in favour of work – in order to try to store up as much as possible for oneself.[391] It may even be what seems like an innocent thought – storing up for when one is too old or feeble to take care of oneself. The idea of work in the monastery is not just for the physicality of the labor but also to avoid being a beggar,

[388] Richard Newhauser, *Early History of Greed: The Sin of Avarice in Early Medieval Thought and Literature,* Port Chester, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p.47.
[389] Richard Newhauser, *Early History of Greed*, p.49.
[390] Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 21; also cf. *Foundations* 4 for connection to Vainglory.
[391] cf. Evagrius, *Eight thoughts* 3.11, 3.12, 3.12; *Prak.* 9; *Foundations* 4; *Monks* 25

therefore, a monk can have anxiety about being too old to work and therefore becoming a beggar relying entirely on the younger monks. For Evagrius, freedom from possessions is more about the individual than for Cassian who is writing for those in a more community atmosphere.[392] It also has "close associations" with vainglory and pride not found in Cassian's understanding of the vice.[393]

Both Evagrius and Cassian understand avarice to proceed from fornication, and both speak about a certain connection with anger. For Cassian, anger comes from avarice[394], but for Evagrius, the following vice is more often sadness and speaks of a certain sadness that comes for the one fighting against avarice.[395] Cassian also connects avarice to gluttony, and specifically the third type of gluttony, which "fastens the inextricable bonds of avarice on the necks of its captives and never permits the monk to be rooted in Christ's utter deprivation."[396] Cassian also gives a list of all the lesser vices that come from avarice – along with all the other eight vices – in Conference Five, which is particular to his works: "Though earlier writers were obviously acquainted with the notion that certain evils follow in subordinate fashion from other more serious failings, no writer before Cassian had generated the particular groupings he did, and certainly not with his thoroughness. After his work, the production of such series became habit of moral theologians."[397] Cassian makes important connections between the vices not found in Evagrius, yet on the whole his understanding of avarice is very similar to Evagrius,[398] and both monks' understanding is part of a bigger tradition that is closely tied to Christ.

b. Avarice in Scripture

[392] Cf. Richard Newhauser, *Early History of Greed,* p.61
[393] Cf. Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 21
[394] Cf. *Inst.* 7.7.5, 7.8; *Conf.* 3.5.2-3, 4.21.1-4
[395] Cf. Evagrius, *Eight Thoughts,* 3.7, 5.12; for Anger and Sadness, cf. *Skemmata* 67: "The houses of the avaricious are filled with the anger of beasts; and the birds of sadness will rest in them."
[396] *Conf.* 5.11.2
[397] Richard Newhauser, *Early History of Greed,* p.64; also cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 5.16.5
[398] Richard Newhauser also notes this similarity and difference, especially in terms of audience, cf. *Early History of Greed,* p.61-63

For both monks, the understanding of avarice is traditionally rooted in 1 Tim 6:10 as the "roots of all evils" (*radix...omnium malorum*). While the Vulgate uses the word *cupiditas*, the Greek has ἡ φιλαργυρία, which literally means "love of silver", and is the word Evagrius uses for the third vice. Cassian favours *filargyria,* but also commonly uses *avaritia*, meaning "greed, miserliness". Both monks refer to this aspect of avarice repeatedly.[399] Avarice is especially the "root of all evils" for the monk because it is the exact opposite of the essential renunciation of the monastic life. For Evagrius, it is a connection to the material, earthly world – that which must be renounced in order to progress in spiritual knowledge.

Another important scriptural passage is Col 3:5, which defines avarice (Vulgate – *avaritia*, Greek – πλεονεξία) as "slavery to idols".[400] Evagrius references it in his definition of avarice in *On the Vices Opposed to the Virtues*, in the prologue to the *Prakitkos* in his exposition on the *melote*, which represents avarice for him, and in the first *Exhortation to Monks.*[401] However, where Evagrius just references the quote from the Apostle, Cassian goes further in the *Institutes* in order to explain why it is considered slavery to idols – even for one who is clearly not pagan. He explains that "gold and the hope of gain" becomes "their god", hence why the Apostle "declares that it is not only the root of all evils but also slavery to idols".

> "You see, then, how ruinous this madness becomes as it increases step by step, so that by the Apostle's words it is even declared to be a slavery to idol and effigies because, bypassing the form of God and his image, which one who serves God devoutly should maintain unsullied in himself, it prefers to love and look upon human figures cast in gold instead of God."[402]

Then, later in Conference Twelve, Cassian picks up the words of the Apostle again and explains "For whoever does not contribute to the needs of the poor and sets his own money,

[399] For Evagrius's uses of 1 Tim 6:10, cf. *On the eight thoughts* 3.1, 3.2; *On thoughts* 1, 21; *Letter* 52.3; as well as more oblique references in *Praktikos* 9, 18. For Cassian's, cf. *Inst.* 7.2, 7.6, 7.11, 7.12, 7.25.2, 12.27.1; *Conf.*5.6.6.
[400] Interestingly, Cassian, when quoting this passage in Latin, using *avaritia*, says, "which is called φιλαργυρία in Greek".
[401] cf. *Vices* 3; *Prak* prol 6; and *Ex. to Monks* 1.2
[402] *Inst.* 7.7.6

which he holds onto with a faithless grasp, above the commands of Christ commits the crime of idolatry by preferring the love of worldly goods to divine love."[403] Clearly, Cassian does not understand the connection of avarice to idolatry as pagan idolatry itself, but rather the focus on the worldly, that which should have been renounced upon entrance into the monastery as opposed to following the correct renunciation. This is also found in Evagrius, in *On the Eight Thoughts* 3.14, when he describes one suffers from the passion of avarice as one who "worships a useless piece of base-metal".

Cassian explicitly says that there are three types of avarice.[404] All three can also be found in Evagrius' *Antirrhetikos* 3.24: "To the Lord concerning the thought of love of money that persists in us and suggests to our intellect either the remembrance of money that we have renounced, or the effort that we are making to acquire things that at present cannot be seen, or the preservation and safekeeping of the things we have now..." While Cassian does not give them in this same exact order, there is clearly Evagrian influence here; however, there is also more than that. In the *Institutes,* Cassian gives a biblical example of each of these three kinds of Avarice. The first is Gehazi, "who wanted to acquire things that he had never in fact possessed before"; second is Judas "wishing to take up the money again that he had renounced when previously he had followed Christ"; and third are Ananias and Sapphira "who held back a certain part of what they possessed".[405] These three examples are crucial for illustrating Cassian's diverse sources on even his most Evagrian of subjects.

As already stated, Cassian's understanding of avarice is not much different than Evagrius, except in a few places. Of the three examples mentioned above, Evagrius only mentions Gehazi in connection to avarice.[406] In other authors previous to Cassian, all three "had been related to negative effects of avarice before Cassian's work, though it was his

[403] *Conf.* 12.2.6
[404] Cassian, *Inst.*7.14.1; *Conf*. 5.11.5
[405] Cassian, *Inst.* 7.14.2
[406] Cf. *Antirrhetikos* 3.15

innovation to place them in the scheme of the vice's internal divisions."[407] Gehazi had been connected to avarice by Evagrius, Palladius, and Jerome. Ananias and Sapphira are found in John Chrysostom and Jerome, and Judas' connection to avarice is quite common, though not before Origen. Basil even notes "that a monk with possessions becomes, in fact, another Judas" in *Constitutiones asceticae* 34.[408] Crucially, for Cassian, Chrysostom stated that avarice is what "made a leper of Gehazi instead of a disciple to the prophet, brought about the death of Ananias and his people, created Judas the traitor".[409] It is difficult to find clear literary connections between Cassian and Chrysostom, yet it is clear that the latter had a great impact on the former. Here, in the scriptural examples of avarice, there seems to be Chrysostom when we would expect Evagrius.[410]

Cassian actually repeatedly uses Judas in connection to avarice, which is not his own innovation unless taken in consideration with Evagrius' expositions on avarice.[411] Another important development in the explanation of avarice in Cassian is his explicit definition of it as "unnatural". As seen above, gluttony and fornication are both natural vices, perversions of natural and necessary human impulses – existing since just after the Fall (or in gluttony's case, during the Fall). Avarice, on the other hand, did not actually exist before the Flood – neither does it have to exist in human society, since, as Cassian tells us, it does not exist in some pagan nations.[412] Cassian even says that the other vices "seem to be a part of human nature and to have their sources as it were inborn in us. They are, so to speak, deeply rooted in the flesh, are present almost at the moment of a person's birth, and precede the ability to distinguish between good and evil."[413] He says this in the very beginning of the book on

[407] Richard Newhauser, *Early History of Greed*, p.66
[408] Ibid.
[409] John Chrysostom, *Hom on John* 65.3
[410] cf. Newhauser, *Early History of Greed*, p.66; and Philip Rousseau, *Ascetics, Authority and the Church*, p.171.
[411] cf. *Inst.* 7.14, 7.23, 7.30; *Conf.* 3.5.3, 17.12.2
[412] cf. *Conf.* 5.8.2-3
[413] *Inst.* 7.1

avarice in the *Institutes* in order to impress upon his audience that avarice is a learned behaviour that is easily avoided, but once succumbed to, "much more difficult to get rid of once there has been neglect and it has been let into the heart".[414] This is because it is a "product of negligence and of the decision of an evil will."[415]

In his understanding of avarice it is clear that he has influences from both Evagrius and John Chrysostom. Evagrius, in *On Thoughts*, says that avarice is "a pleasure hostile to humanity, born of free will, and compelling the mind to make improper use of the creatures of God..."[416] While Evagrius doesn't use the terminology of "unnatural", if this quote is taken with an earlier discussion on angelic, human, and demonic thoughts, his ideas become a little clearer. In *On Thoughts* 8, Evagrius uses the example of gold and how each kind of thought will react to it: an angelic thought will investigate the purpose and positive uses of it as a creation of God; a human thought "neither seeks the acquisition of gold nor is concerned with investigating what gold symbolizes; rather, it merely introduces in the intellect the simple form of gold separate from any passion of greed"; and the demonic thought "without shame [...] suggests only the acquisition of gold and predits the enjoyment and esteem that will come from this." Evagrius separates greed from human thoughts and says that it is "hostile to humanity" because it is in fact a demonic thought for him.

John Chrysostom also investigates avarice in the history of humanity and in his *Homily on John 11:49-12:8*, he says that it "is weaker than all the others, it is not inborn, nor natural, for then it would have been placed in us at the beginning..."[417] Each of these characteristics can be found in Cassian: he calls avarice a weak adversary in *Institutes* 7.20, and contrasts it with the "natural" and "inborn" vices in *Institutes* 7.1-3 (as seen above).

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[414] *Inst.* 7.2
[415] *Inst.* 7.3.2
[416] Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 19
[417] Chrysostom, *Hom on John* 65.3; for other references to Avarice as not natural in Chrysostom, cf. *Hom on Matthew* 80.3 (where he again says that Avarice is easy to get the better of if one is willing), *Hom on John* 74.3, and *De Virg.* 75.1 (where he says it does "not have [its] origin in nature"; Gregory Nazianzus also considers Avarice to not be human or natural, cf. *orations* 14.25-26.

Importantly, also in this Homily is Chrysostom's connection of Gehazi, Ananias and Sapphira, and Judas with avarice. Chrysostom also relates it to negligence in his *Homily on Matthew* 80.3, "slackmindedness" in *Homily on John* 74.3, and "laziness" in *On Virginity* 75.1.

c. Evagrius' further meaning of avarice

Although the general understanding of avarice for Cassian is very similar to Evagrius, there are clearly notable differences. One is the influence from Chrysostom in scriptural evidence for the vice. Another is Evagrius' further theological dimension for avarice not present in Cassian's understanding. Evagrius foregrounds avarice, along with gluttony and vainglory, at the beginning of *On Thoughts*.[418] He says that these three are the vices on the front line, off which all the other vices proceed. This is based on his understanding of the temptation of Jesus. Working from the Gospel of Luke, Evagrius considers the Devil's temptation of Jesus represent gluttony, avarice, and vainglory, in that order. This order fits into Evagrius' organization of the vices, gluttony is the first carnal vice, avarice is the first of the soul, and vainglory the first of those that come after all the others have been conquered. For Evagrius, each of these vices are "much-mattered" and deal specifically with the material world. Gluttony requires material sustenance for the material body, avarice requires material possessions related to the social world, and vainglory looks for esteem from the judgment of other human beings, a judgment which lies only within the scope of human knowledge. The knowledge of the material world is part of the second natural contemplation, over which Christ presides. Therefore, there is a cosmological and Christological dimension to Evagrius' understanding of avarice.

Given Cassian's Christocentric nature in his writing, one would think that he would certainly bring this forward from his Evagrian education; however, it is not an idea based on

[418] Cf. Evagrius, *On thoughts 1*

Cassian's cosmology and Christology. His is vastly different from Evagrius' making this significance of gluttony, avarice, and vainglory irrelevant within his theology.[419] Cassian actually gives two understandings of the temptations of Jesus based depending on which Gospel account one is looking at.[420] From Matthew, one finds gluttony, vainglory, and pride, whereas– in Luke it could be gluttony, avarice, and pride. While his insistence on pride as the third temptation is more important for the section on pride, his inclusion of avarice seems to possibly be a nod to his predecessor. He spends more time on the interpretation of Matthew, but does not seem to favour one over the other.[421] However, even if he were to favour the interpretation from Luke, the significance for avarice would still not fit into his theology. He does not use the "much-mattered" designation like Evagrius does, nor would there be a trifecta since he uses pride as the third temptation, not vainglory. He also does not have the same schema of knowledge based on creation and Christology as Evagrius; therefore, this significance for avarice will only work within Evagrius' theology.

Avarice has a long and plentiful history before and outside of Evagrius' and Cassian's monastic programs. They both work within the preceding tradition concerning avarice, but actually create a harsher and stricter rule against it because of their purely monastic audience. For Cassian, as well, part of his agenda is to work against the established "asceticism" in Gaul in which wealthy "ascetics" don't actually perform what Cassian would consider a complete renunciation and retain their wealth and property. It is important, however, that while Evagrius is within a wider tradition concerning avarice, so is Cassian. Often the vices are brushed off in Cassian as almost purely Evagrian, but it is clear here that there is more to

[419] This significant difference in theology between Cassian and Evagrius will be investigated in the following chapters.
[420] Cf. *Conf.* 5.6.1-7
[421] It is interesting that it is Evagrius that more definitely connects avarice to the temptation of Jesus since historically, it has its roots the teachings of Christ to sell all one has and follow Him. Cassian is traditionally the more Christological, but here he does not deem this a necessary aspect of the temptation of Jesus. He uses each Gospel account later in the *Conferences*, citing the order of temptations from Matthew in *Conf.* 22.10, and then Luke in *Conf.* 24.17. However, here, he says that the second temptation (according to Luke) was to tempt the irascible part of Jesus, but just before this passage, in 24.15.4, he says that avarice is in the concupiscible part of the soul (vainglory wouldn't fit here either as it is the rational part).

it than that. He is able to discriminatingly use certain aspects of the Evagrian avarice that work within his theology and leave out other aspects. He is also able to develop it through other influences. While this practice is not unique to Cassian, its recognition is vital to bigger picture of understanding the Evagrian influence on the younger monk.

II.3.4: Anger

Next in Cassian's list of vices is anger – a vice which is most often fifth after sadness for Evagrius. Anger is a very broad and complex vice for both monks, one which could warrant a full monograph on it alone.[422] Part of the reason for this complexity is its emotional nature. In Evagrius' schema, gluttony, fornication, and avarice are all a part of the concupiscible part of the soul, or the desiring part. They each come from desire – whether bodily desire in the case of gluttony and fornication, or worldly desire in the case of avarice. For Evagrius, these three are very clearly rooted in the material world. While Cassian does not have the same emphasis and definition of the material world as Evagrius because of his different understanding of Creation, he still holds to this theme.[423] For Cassian, there are three kinds of anger: θυμὸς, ὀργὴ, and μῆνις.[424] The first "blazes up interiorly", the second is when a monk acts on his anger in "word and deed and effect", and third is the anger that lingers and festers rather than blowing up immediately. All three kinds are equally as bad as the others. All three of these Greek terms are used by Evagrius, but not necessarily in the distinctions Cassian makes. *Thumos* is often used for either anger or irascibility.

[422] In fact, Evagrius' conception of Anger has warranted an entire (excellent) work to itself from Gabriel Bunge, cf. Gabriel Bunge, *Drachenwein und Engelsbrot: Die Lehre des Evagrios Pontikos von Zorn und Sanftmut*, Würzburg: Der Christliche Osten, 1999.
[423] In *Conf.* 24. 15.4, Cassian also states that these three are part of the concupiscible part of the soul – though he does not state this in his earlier expositions on the vices.
[424] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.11.7

Anger presents a new challenge not previously experienced in the three preceding vices. However, it does have a certain affinity to avarice, in that it requires something external to set it off.[425] Gertrude Gillette points out that "by listing anger next to avarice, Cassian shows more clearly its dependence on the former vice, but risks implying that anger has only one source. Cassian also realizes his neat little scheme is somewhat hypothetical."[426] While the scheme may be to a certain point hypothetical, since Cassian explains that each individual has his particular vice that is a greater struggle for him than the others, his aim here isn't a strict order for the monk to conquer avarice then anger. Rather, through understanding the connections and affinities it will be easier to discern and conquer the vices.

Avarice and anger have a certain affinity in that they both require an external trigger, as well as the fact that anger often comes from the frustrations of not receiving one's avaricious desires; however, Cassian makes it clear that they are not similar in the fact that avarice is unnatural and anger natural.[427] Anger is a natural movement of the soul which can be seen in children, and therefore must have been placed within us by the Creator, but "we have chosen to abuse [it] in a wicked fashion and to twist [it], instead, to harmful deeds".[428] This follows with Evagrius' general idea of vice as something that "arise[s] from a perversion of the activities—good in themselves—of the soul's three powers."[429] These three powers are the concuspicible, irascible, and the rational. Anger is within the irascible part of the soul and for Evagrius is often interchangeable with "irascible" or "irascibility". Cassian presents these three parts of the soul at the very end of his ascetic works – in Conference Twenty-Four. It is interesting and worth noting that he does not use this method of organization at the beginning of Conference Five when he is explaining the relationships between the vices and ways to

[425] Cf. *Conf.* 5.3 and 5.8.1
[426] Gertrude Gillette, *Four Faces of Anger,* 51
[427] On it arising from Avarice, cf. *Inst.* 4.15.1, 7.7.4, 7.9.2; *Conf.* 5.2, 5.3, 5.8.1; For the natural and unnaturalness of Anger and Avarice, cf. *Inst.* 7.3.1; *Conf.* 5.8.1
[428] *Inst.* 7.4
[429] Gabriel Bunge, *Dragon's Wine and Angel's Bread: the teaching of Evagrius Ponticus on anger and meekness,* Anthony P. Gythiel, (trans.), Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2009, 43.

understand them through organization. Columba Stewart suggests that Cassian has been thinking of the tripartite soul all along in his ascetic works, but only explicitly states it in the last Conference; however, in Conference Five, there is no indication he is thinking of the vices as being organized along these lines.

Through his connection with the irascible part of the soul, which produces the virtues of courage and perseverance, Evagrius more clearly expounds on the positive use of anger in the spiritual battle.[430] Gillette make his understanding of the irascible/anger clearer when she explains: "The translation 'of incentive power' for *thumos* shows its positive nature: a capacity which enables a person to stir up a degree of energizing power in order to face and overcome some perceived obstacle. When this energizing power is exercised as a virtue it is synonymous with *courage*."[431] Anger at the vices can be a positive catalyst for the monk's progress, but it can *only* be directed at the evil thoughts and demons: "for the usage of irascibility lies in this, namely, in fighting against the serpent with enmity (cf. Gen 3:15), but with gentleness and mildness exercising a charitable patience with one's brother while doing battle with this thought."[432] For Evagrius, the demons are dominated by anger (*thumos*).[433] That anger is most often directed at human beings in the natural and constant struggle between men and demons. Therefore, anger may be used by the monk against the demons and thoughts, but if that anger turns towards a fellow human being, he becomes like a demon. As Gabriel Bunge explains, anger "'animalizes' man and turns him into a 'demon'."[434] For Evagrius, the concupiscible part of the soul must be undertaken first because it is a natural characteristic of human beings, then the irascible part which is most similar to the demons,

[430] For the virtues found in each part of the soul, cf. *Praktikos* 89; for the positives uses of anger against the other evil thoughts, cf. *To Eulogios* 11.9-10; *Praktikos* 24; *On Thoughts* 16, 29; *Excerpts* 58; *Definitions* 11; *On Eccl* (7:3-7) 56
[431] Gillette, *Four Faces of Anger,* 25; also cf. *Prak* 89
[432] Evagrius, *To Eulogios* 11.10
[433] cf. *KG* 1.68
[434] Bunge, *Dragon's Wine and Angel's Bread,* 59

then the rational which is the predomination of the angels.[435] Because of its affinity to the demons, it separates the monk from spiritual knowledge, the ability for pure prayer, and, ultimately, God. It darkens the soul and blinds the spiritual eyes, which is the opposite of the light of the Lord and the clarity of sight that comes with spiritual knowledge.[436]

a. Psalm 4:5 and Ephesians 4:26

While Cassian follows Evagrius in anger's effect on prayer,[437] his focus and explanation of anger are necessarily different causing the shape of the vice to differ. Cassian does not use the Evagrian idea of the demons being predominated by *thumos*. His cosmology is different making the relationship between demons and men different – this will be dealt with in detail in a later chapter. Both Evagrius and Cassian use Ps 4:5, "Be angry and do not sin", in order to support the appropriate use of anger. Evagrius mentions it when explaining the anger is useful against the demon of fornication, but he also warns that the demon of anger may act like that of fornication in order to stir up one's anger.[438] Cassian uses it to support his explanation of the appropriate use of anger: "when we wax indignant against the wanton movements of our own heart and are angered at things that we are ashamed to do or to say in the sight of human beings but that have found their way into the recesses of our heart..."[439] However, Cassian goes on to point out that Paul, when referring to Ps 4:5, also adds: "The sun should not go down on your anger, and you should not give room to the devil."[440] Cassian is very clear that this may be confusing, but explains that while it is right to

[435] Cf. *KG* 1.68
[436] cf. *Antirrhetikos* 5.62; *To Eulogios* 6.6, 26.28, 30.32; *On the eight thoughts* 4.6; *Praktikos* 23; *On Thoughts* 32; *On Prayer* 21, 27, 64; *Exhortations to Monks* 2.2; *Gnostikos* 5; and *KG* 4.38, 4.47, 5.89; also cf. Gabriel Bunge, *Dragon's Wine and Angel's Bread,* 67-74
[437] For darkness and blindess in Cassian, cf. *Inst.* 8.1.1, 8.5-6, 8.9-10, 8.12, 8.22; *Conf.* 19.14.6-7. For anger disturbing Prayer, cf. *Inst.* 8.13-15, 8.22; *Conf.* 9.3.1, 9.3.3, 16.15, 16.16.1
[438] cf. Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 16
[439] Cassian, *Inst.* 8.7; This is the only place in which Cassian talks about the positive function of anger. Gillette suggests "that once an exception was made, it cease[d] to be an important issue, or at least not as important as it was for Evagrius." cf. Gillette, *Four Faces of Anger,* 55
[440] Eph. 4:26

use anger against the vices, if it is not kept in check, the vice of anger will grow and darken the heart, and "Christ, the sun of righteousness" will depart and the monk will then "offer room to the devil" in his heart.[441] However, not only is Christ a "sun" and a source of light, but also:

> "the mind (that is, the νοῦς or reason), which according to the tropical understanding is rightfully called a sun because it surveys all the thoughts and judgments of the heart, must not be extinguished by the vice of anger. Otherwise, when it goes down and the darkness of disturbances—along with their author, the devil—occupies all our heart's understanding and we have been possessed by the darkness of anger as if we were in the depths of night, we shall not know how we are to act."[442]

Cassian provides a very detailed interpretation of this passage and how one is meant to understand how anger works within the heart. His Evagrian influences are very clear in his use of the relationship between the *nous* and the heart, however, this is not Evagrius' understanding of Eph 4:26. In *Praktikos* 21, which is in the section on remedies for anger, Evagrius gives his interpretation: "'Let not the sun go down on our anger', lest by night the demons come upon us to strike fear in our souls and render our minds more cowardly for the fight on the morrow. For frightful apparitions usually arise from the disturbance of the irascible part."[443] For Evagrius, "let not the sun go down on your anger" is a warning about night-time attacks from the demons, not an allegorical warning about the light of Christ leaving the angry heart. For Cassian, the focus on the heart is crucial in understanding anger and his theology as a whole. As stated before, his cosmology and anthropology are different than Evagrius', as is his understanding of the relationship between the uncreated and created. Evagrius focuses on a humanity that is working amongst and along with the rational beings for a complete reunification with the divine. Cassian's focus is on the relationship between the inner and outer man and bringing them to harmony with each other and God in salvation.

[441] Cassian, *Inst.* 8.9
[442] Cassian, *Inst.* 8.10
[443] This understanding is further supported in *Excerpts* 4 and *On Proverbs* (3:24-25) 36: "By this text we know that suitable mercy dispels the terrifying visions that arrive to us in the night. Gentleness, the absence of anger and forbearance have also the same effect, as well as all virtues that pacify the turmoil of the irascible part. It is indeed from the turmoil of the irascible part that terrifying visions arise."

b. The problem of divine anger

Again, anger is a complex and difficult emotion/vice to understand and adequately explain. Christian theologians have struggled to comprehend human anger – let alone the divine anger seen in Scripture. There are passages which refer to God's anger, yet there are also passages denouncing human anger. If human anger is wrong, how could the perfect and impassable God have anger? The morality of anger is a stage for debate throughout the development of Christianity. Even for Evagrius and Cassian's predecessors and contemporaries, it was a difficult line to draw in understanding anger both for the divine and the human.[444] The condemnation of anger has its roots in Stoicism, but "the monastic condemnation of the passion of anger depended primarily on Jesus' interdiction of anger in the Sermon on the Mount, and only secondarily upon the Stoic caution regarding the corrupting effects of this passion."[445] Cassian engages more with the wider issue of divine anger than Evagrius – most likely because of his experience with the anthropomorphite controversy, during which he left Egypt.[446] After telling the audience of the *Institutes* that anger must be completely uprooted, Cassian spends a significant portion of the beginning of the book on Anger explaining how to understand divine anger. He explains that some people have tried "to excuse this most destructive disease of the soul by attempting to extenuate it by a rather detestable interpretation of Scripture."[447] He then goes on to explain that Scripture refers to the body parts of God, but these are understood only as familiar human terms in which to describe the undescribable.[448] Therefore, "when we read of God's anger and wrath, we must not think of it ἀνθρωποπαθῶς—that is, in terms of lowly human disturbances, but in

[444] For more on the longevity of the problem of divine anger, cf. Michael McCarthy, "Divine Wrath and Human Anger: Embarrassment Ancient and New", *Journal of Theological Studies* 70, 2009, 845-874. For a detailed account of the Patristic debate on divine anger, cf. Paul Gavrilyuk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God: the dialectics of Patristic thought*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, 51-60.
[445] Gavrilyuk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God*, 56-7.
[446] Cf. Gillette, *Four Faces of Anger,* 53
[447] *Inst.* 8.2
[448] cf. *Inst.* 8.4.1

a manner worthy of God, who is free of all disturbance."[449] Again, like God's body, it is the only way humans can attempt to describe the human experience with God by using human terminology. "It is fear of divine punishment, Cassian proposed, that caused humans to experience divine kindness and justice as wrath and vehement anger."[450] Scripture reveals human experiences of the divine – and therefore, one must understand it can only be expressed in human language that actually cannot adequately describe the "invisible, ineffable, incomprehensible, simple, and uncomposite" God.[451] Augustine also has a similar interpretation of the divine wrath of Scripture; however, he also focuses on the salutary intention of God when humans experience his "anger".[452]

c. *Community*

It is also vital to note that Cassian's focus is more on the monk living in a community than Evagrius' wider audience of either community or solitary monks. This accounts for his relatively short explanation of the appropriate use of anger against the vices and a much greater focus given to interpersonal relationships and the complete uprooting of anger. Besides *Institutes* Book Eight and Conference Five, the two places Cassian writes most on anger are in Conference Nine, on prayer, and Conference Sixteen, which is on friendship. In fact harmony with one's brothers is essential for pure prayer as found in Matthew 5:23-4: "If, then, you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, then come and offer your gift." Not only is your own anger against a brother a hindrance to prayer, but also your brother's anger at you. In Conference Sixteen, Cassian explains that "you will be punished in the same way for having transgressed the Lord's

[449] *Inst.* 8.4.3
[450] Gavrilyuk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God,* 57
[451] *Inst.* 8.4.1
[452] cf. McCarthy, "Divine Wrath and Human Anger", 865-7; Gavrilyuk, *The Suffering of the Impassible God*, 57.

command" if there is any anger between brothers, no matter who is the one actually angry.[453] Cassian spends an entire Conference on friendship and harmony between brothers (Christian brothers, that is)[454] showing the importance of community in his works. Gillette even suggests that the core of his teaching in this Conference is that "anger disrupts a relationship and sows the seeds of hatred. Our relationship with others is the most basic element of community life. If we ignore or refuse to be reconciled, we destroy the very heart of monasticism."[455] However, the main thrust of this Conference besides eradicating anger is cultivating love.

d. *Love*

Cassian is not original in his emphasis on love as the anti-thesis of anger. It is through the cultivating of all the virtues, and especially those associated with conquering anger, patience and gentleness, that one cultivates love. Evagrius uses patience when specifically talking about anger, and gentleness in reference to irascibility and anger interchangeably.[456] Cassian also focuses more on patience as the virtue to be cultivated in the eradication of anger, but uses gentleness sometimes in reference to anger, but also in reference to all vices.[457] However, both monks stress the opposition of anger and love: "Just as nothing is to be preferred to love, then, so also, on the other hand, nothing is to be less esteemed than rage and wrath."[458] Evagrius even states: "The irascible requires more remedies than the concupiscuble, and for this reason love is said to be great (1 Cor 13:13), for it is the bridle of

[453] Cassian, *Conf.* 16.6.7
[454] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 16.15-17
[455] Gillette, *Four Faces of Anger,* 57
[456] For Patience, cf. Evagrius, *Antirrhetikos* 5.12, 5.13, 5.22; *To Eulogios* 5.5, 11.10, 21.23, 26.27; *Vices* 5; *On the eight thoughts* 4.9, 4.12; *Praktikos* 15; *On Psalms* (131:7) 7. For Gentleness, cf. Evagrius, *Antirrhetikos* 5.7, 5.9, 5.22, 5.23; *To Eulogios* 11.10, 26.27; *Vices* 5; *On the eight thoughts* 4.11; *Praktikos* prol 4, 20; *On Thoughts* 5, 13, 27; *On Prayer* 14, 145; *Monks* 12, 34, 53, 94, 107, 111, 133; *Virgin* 45; *Skemmata* 3; *Maxims* 2.18, 3.2; *On Psalms* (131:1) 1; *On Proverbs* (31:21-37) 7; *Letter* 19
[457] For Patience, cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 8, 12.3.2; *Conf.* 5.23.2, 9.12.2, 11.9.2, 12.6.1, 15.8, 16.22, 18.13.1-3, 18.14, 18.16. For Gentleness, cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 10.10.10, 11.9.2, 12.6.1, 12.6.5, 12.12.3, 16.22
[458] Cassian, *Conf.* 16.7

anger."[459] In *To Eulogios*, he says that love "brings patience to the fore and it has a cooling effect on boiling irascibility."[460]

Another important passage in Evagrius concerning the virtues connected to anger, is from *On the Eight Thoughts* 4.11: "The gentleness of a man is remembered by God (cf. Ps 131:1), and a soul without anger becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit." He expounds on this more in his work *On Psalms*, "...there is required a great freedom from anger in order than one may receive the Lord. For gentleness is the freedom from disturbance in the irascible part..."[461] While Cassian does not use this biblical quotation, he does speak of the heart as either being filled with the Holy Spirit or the Devil. As seen already, he considered Eph 4:26 to be warning the monk not to give room to the Devil in his heart (a passage interpreted very differently by Evagrius). Cassian has a greater focus and exposition of the inner and outer man in his works than Evagrius and part of the significance and reason for this are their different cosmologies and anthropologies. However, it is important to note that the eradication of anger is connected to the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the heart for both monks showing probable inspiration by Evagrius of a concept developed differently and with a different emphasis in Cassian.

II.3.5: Sadness

Institutes Book Nine is the shortest book on the eight vices. Sadness is different than all the other vices yet is often very much tied up with them. It is the frustration of one's anger, desires, remembrance and longing for the past, and can turn into a deadly despair. In the *Antirrhetikos*, it is very much connected to the spiritual battle through fear of the demons and their power, fear of the night and demonic visions, feeling abandoned by God, not

[459] Evagrius, *Praktikos* 38
[460] Evagrius, *To Eulogios* 21.23
[461] Evagrius, *On Psalms* (131:1) 1

understanding that God doesn't allow the monk to be tried beyond his strength, etc. "Sadness [...] is a negative reaction to the illusory passions generated from what is not and cannot be."[462] For Evagrius, it is a viper (*On Thoughts* 12), a lion (*On the Eight Thoughts* 5.2), a weakness of faith (*Antirrhetikos* 4.67), the remembrance of unchangeable things (*Antirrhetikos* 4.73, *On the Vices Opposed to the Virtues* 4, *Eulogios* 7.7, *On Thoughts* 36), and, most importantly, separates the monk from spiritual knowledge, contemplation, and pure prayer (*On the Eight Thoughts* 5.6, 5.7; *To Monks* 56; *On Prayer* 16; *Gnostikos* 10).

Cassian describes sadness as discouraging, burdensome and a kind of bitterness.[463] It disturbs pure prayer and causes the monk to be separated from the divine. Spiritual joy is its remedial virtue.[464] For him, it is a part of the punishment of Eve: "The woman who persuaded [Adam] to do this thing was deserving of much groaning and sorrow and sadness..."[465] This is connected to the salutary function of Godly sadness found in both Evagrius and Cassian:

> "Hence sadness is to be judged beneficial for us in one instance alone—when we conceive it out of repentance for our sins and are inflamed by a desire for perfection, and by the contemplation of future blessedness. Of this the blessed Apostle himself says: 'The sadness that is in accordance with God works repentance unto a lasting salvation, but the world's sadness works death.' (2 Cor 7:10)"[466]

Cassian then further divides worldly sadness into two further categories: that which comes from either anger or avarice, and that which comes from "unreasonable mental anguish or from despair".[467] This unreasonable mental anguish is also often called a "deadly despair", which can be seen in the case of Cain and Judas. It led to death in both cases because it caused Cain to murder his own brother and Judas "to hang himself with a noose in his

[462] Corrigan, *Evagrius and Gregory*, 76
[463] For discouragement, cf. *Conf.* 2.13.4-12, 6.9.3, 18.11.4; for burden and heaviness, cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 9.8.3, 17.25.8, 18.11.4; for bitterness, cf. *Conf.* 7.19.3, 14.17.3, 16.15, 16.18.6, 18.11.4
[464] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 9.1, 9.11; *Conf.* 9.3.1; For Joy in Cassian, cf. *Inst.* 9.11; *Conf.* 1.13.4, 5.23.2, 14.17.3; For Joy in Evagrius, cf. *Eulogios* 6.6, *Vices* 4, *Letter to Melania* 42
[465] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.11.2
[466] Cassian, *Conf.* 9.10 (Scriptural reference in parentheses is my own); for more on these two distinct types of sadness, cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 7.3.3, 9.11; *Conf.* 5.23.2, 21.8.2, 23.7.2, 24.26.6; and for Evagrius, *Eulogios* 7.7; *On the eight thoughts* 5.19, 5.20; *On Thoughts* 12; *Exhortations to Monks* 1.5
[467] *Conf.* 5.11.8

despair."[468] Angela Tilby highlights this point by stating that "for Cassian sadness is an insidious tendency that eats away at the heart of a monk, like a moth eating holes in clothing. He does not link it to memory and nostalgia in the way that Evagrius did, but sees it more as a kind of depression, to be cured by meditation."[469]

a. Sadness among the demons

Cassian's main characteristic concerning sadness (as well as its following vice, acedia) is that it is aroused from within. He repeatedly states that sadness is within our power[470] – this is because part of the effect of sadness is feeling hopeless or powerless to change a situation; therefore, Cassian stresses that actually one does have power over sadness and conquering it requires both inner meditation and a community of brothers.[471] However, not only humans feel sadness or loss in Cassian's works. In Conference Seven, Cassian explains that demons "have a certain anxiety and sadness in the conflict," because otherwise it would not be a noble and fair fight if there wasn't toil and effort on both sides.[472] While Evagrius considers the demons to be ruled by the irascible, and sadness is a part of the irascible, his references to demons in connection to sadness have nothing to do with feeling sadness themselves. Rather, it is the monk's fear of the demons and their attacks when the monk is struggling with sadness. The difference in the spiritual battle and enemy of the demons will be explored more in a later chapter, but it is important here to note the different character and understanding of sadness itself between Evagrius and Cassian. The fact that demons feel sadness encourages a different understanding for one's enemy since the monk understands what it feels like to feel loss and disappointment.

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[468] *Inst.* 9.9; for Cassian's connection of sadness to death, cf. *Inst* 9.13; *Conf* 1.13.3, 2.13.4, 5.11.8, 5.23.2, 6.10.3, 14.17.3

[469] Angela Tilby, *The Seven Deadly Sins*, 111

[470] cf. *Inst.* 9.5, 9.7, 9.8; *Conf.* 5.3, 5.9, 24.25.5, 24.26.13

[471] Cf. *inst.* 6.3, 9.7; In *Inst.* 5.41, Cassian refers to a saying by Macarius: "a monk should pay attention to fasting as if he were going to dwell in the body for a hundred years, and that he should restrain the movement of the minds, forget slights, reject sadness, and disdain sorrow and setbacks as if he were going to die daily." Evagrius also mentions this saying of Macarius, yet he relates dying "tomorrow" to acedia, not sadness as Cassian does; cf. *Praktikos* 29.

[472] *Conf.* 7.21.1

II.3.6: Acedia

Acedia is the sixth vice for both Evagrius and Cassian. It is the enemy of the ascetic especially. Acedia urges him to relax or abandon his ascetic efforts in frustration, hopelessness, or lost faith. It causes the monk's mind to be unable to stay in one place causing his body to also have a certain restlessness so that he gets up constantly, wanders and visits other brothers, decides his cell is not adequate and he needs another one, etc.[473] Cassian gives his detailed explanation of the effects of acedia at the beginning of *Institutes* Book Ten. It is very similar to Evagrius' *Praktikos* 12, as well as the second half of *On the Eight Thoughts* 6.[474] Cassian describes it in *Inst.* 5.1 as "anxiety or weariness of the heart", because it comes upon a monk after he has been toiling for a long time and having engaged in the spiritual battle for a long time so that he starts to feel abandoned by God or just exhausted in his soul from the constant struggle.[475] Evagrius calls it the "most oppressive of all, but [it] leaves the soul proven to the highest degree."[476] While Cassian's understanding of acedia strongly echoes Evagrius, it is a simplified version of the enemy of asceticism. Evagrius provides more examples of the ways it can arise, i.e. during psalmody (*Eul.* 9.8-9, *Vices* 4), from bodily sickness (*Antir.* 6.36, 6.48), murmuring (*Antir.* 6.13), and an impatience for knowledge (*Antir.* 6.3). In the *Antirrhetikos,* especially, it is often described of as a loss of hope.[477]

a. The noonday demon

[473] For Evagrius' detailed effects of Acedia, cf. *Antirrhetikos* 6; *Praktikos* 12; and *On the eight thoughts* 6. For Cassian, cf. *Inst* 10.1-3

[474] Marsili connects *Inst.* 10.1 and *On the eight thoughts* 6 as well as *Inst.* 10.25 and *Praktikos* 28; cf. Marsili, *Giovanni Cassiano,* p.91-2. Weber also considers the connection between these passages but then also points out Cassian's own development in 10.4-24 and his characteristic use of biblical passages in grounding his ideas, cf. Weber, *Die Stellung des Johannes Cassianus*, 82-3.

[475] For feeling abandoned and exhausted by the spiritual struggle, in Cassian, cf. *Inst.* 5.1, 10.1; *Conf.* 3.12.4, 10.10.4, 10.10.13, 23.10.1; in Evagrius, cf. *Antirrhetikos* 6.9, 6.34, 6.51; *Praktikos* 12; *On thoughts* 35

[476] *Praktikos* 28; also cf. *Excerpts* 13

[477] cf. Evagrius, *Antirrhetikos* 6.12, 6.14, 6.18, 6.25, 6.32, 6.38, 6.40, 6.49, 6.52, 6.54

Both monks also interpret the noonday demon from Ps 91:6 to be acedia.[478] "It disturbs the monk especially around the sixth hour, rushing in upon him like a kind of fever at just this time and inflicting upon the enfeebled soul the most burning heat of its attacks at regular and set intervals."[479] These intervals may be the hours that Evagrius speaks of in *Praktikos* 12, where he says that it attacks the monk at the "fourth hour and besieges his soul until the eighth hour" as well as making the monk anxious for the ninth hour. In *On Thoughts* 9, Evagrius also speaks of the demon called "Wanderer" (πλάνος)[480] who attacks the monk around dawn when the monk is performing his synaxis in his cell. This demon "leads the mind around from city to city, from village to village, and from house to house" causing it to "distanc[e] itself little by little from the knowledge of God and from virtue". Evagrius actually counsels the monk tempted by this demon to allow him to "play his game" for a day or two in order to fully understand the depths of his deceptions, but then put him to flight by acknowledging him. Then, "upon the defeat of this demon there follows a very heavy sleepiness", which will be dissipated by the Holy Spirit through intense prayer.

While Cassian does speak of the "noonday demon" he does not focus on the demonic attacks as much as acedia's position within the soul. It is the inner man that the monk contends with in eradicating acedia. In describing monks struggling with acedia, he says, "For they have not learned how to calm the movements of the inner man and to resist the storms of their thoughts by a constant concern and a persevering attentiveness..."[481] When referring to acedia, it is the job of monk to discern its place and effect within himself, rather than, as seen above in Evagrius, to discern the "game" of the demon. However, continuing to

[478] Boniface Ramsey notes that this is also found in Origen, *Frag in Ps.* 90:6, and Athansius, *Exp. In Ps.* 90.6, cf. John Cassian, *The Institutes*, Ramsey (trans.), 237.
[479] Cassian, *Inst.* 10.1
[480] Interestingly, Cassian does mention the name *planos* for demons, but he does not describe it in the same way, rather these are "tricksters and jokesters" who deceive by "derision and illusions". While there is no mention of Acedia, he does say that their aim is to "weary" passersby rather than to harm them; however, there is too little connection for Cassian to be talking about Evagrius' *planos* demon, cf. *Conf.* 7.32.1
[481] Cassian, *Conf.* 24.4.3

consider the passage above, Cassian does also consider sleep to be one of the effects of acedia and something to be watched out for. In *Conf.* 5.11.8, he explains that there are two kinds of acedia: "One makes those who are seething with emotion fall asleep. The other encourages a person to abandon his cell and flee." This sleep may be a physical bodily sleep, or also a spiritual sleep of the soul. Interpreting Ps 119:28, "My soul slept from weariness", Cassian explains that this is referring to acedia, "for, indeed, the soul that has been wounded by the weapon of this disturbance is asleep with regard to any contemplation of virtue and any insight provided by the spiritual senses."[482] This sleep of the soul echoes Evagrius' "relaxation of the soul" found repeatedly in *On the Eight Thoughts*.[483]

Acedia also has a special affinity to sadness, according to Cassian, because they are both aroused from within the soul. He also describes their effect as "consumed by the anguish of acedia and sadness".[484] Evagrius most often places anger before acedia in his lists of the vices, but in the *Antirrhetikos* he actually speaks three times of the soul "that is saddened because of the spirit of acedia" suggesting that actually sadness can come from acedia.[485] Evagrius also states in *On the Vices Opposed to the Virtues* that sadness as "a kinsman of acedia" and that acedia is "a partaker in sorrow".[486]

b. *Paul's Letter to the Thessalonians*

While *Inst.* 10.1-3 and 10.6 directly echo Evagrius, beginning with 10.7, Cassian departs from Evagrian acedia and embarks on an exegesis of Paul's letters to the Thessalonians. The Apostle "long ago saw this malady" and seeks to correct them. Cassian explains that he first offers due praise and hesitantly comes to his purpose in writing which is the symptoms he has seen among them. Paul "clearly show[s] that idleness is the reason why

[482] Cassian, *Inst.* 10.4
[483] Cf. Evagrius, *On the eight thoughts* 6.1, 6.9, 6.16, 7.20
[484] Cassian, *Conf.* 12.6.5
[485] Evagrius, *Antirrhetikos* 6.56; cf. *Antir.* 6.20, 6.31, 6.54
[486] Evagrius, *Vices* 4 & 6, respectively

those things happen that he had previously censured".[487] Cassian goes on to explain that Paul's emphasis on work, especially in his saying "If anyone does not want to work, neither may he eat", is the key lesson to be learned. "Like a most skilled physician, with a single healthful precept about work he has cured the causes of so many hurts that spring forth from the root of idleness..."[488] Cassian emphasizes work and meditation for remedying acedia, and persevering in one's cell in order to cultivate fortitude. He uses the term *perseverantia* for staying in one's cell and not fleeing or falling asleep – showing that it is important for the struggle, but what is cultivated and earned through the struggle and eventual conquering of acedia is *fortitudo.*[489] Weber notes that while Evagrius also stresses work and perseverance in battling acedia, Cassian stresses the practical rule of work in a way not found in Evagrius.[490]

Thus far, we have seen important differences between Cassian's understanding of the vices in relation to the Evagrian vices. Not only does he provide a consistent order and organization, he integrates the vices into his particular asceticism. Their definitions have been affected by his divergent foundational theology, his focus on the struggle of the inner man, his stress of the community, and other influences such as other contemporaries and the changing theological context. The first six vices have a certain affinity to each other in that they follow on from each other and are most present in the monk still clearly struggling. The following two principal vices, vainglory and pride, however, attack those who made great progressions in eradicating the first six vices. Through these, we will continue to see important shifts in definition and significance according to theology, context, and focus.

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[487] Cassian, *Inst.* 10.7.5
[488] Cassian, *Inst*. 10.14
[489] Cassian uses *perseverantia* in describing a virtue needed at the very beginning of the monastic journey, the perseverance to continue to wait outside the walls of the monastery before being admitted. It is a quality showed before succumbing to the more difficult trials, cf. *Inst*. 4.2, 4.3, 4.7, 4.27.1. His use of *fortitudo* is more complex in that it can refer to strength of mind (cf.*Inst.* 5.5.1, *Conf.* 6.10.6), body (cf. *Conf.* 6.3.3, 9.24, *de Inc.* 6.2), a quality the demons have in their struggle against us (cf. *Conf.* 7.18, 7.20.1, 8.18.1); however, most often it is in reference to a necessary virtue cultivated through trials, cf. *Inst.* 5.7, 5.12.2, 10.21.4, 12.6.1, 12.17.1, *Conf.* 3.15.3-4, 5.23.2, 7.5.8, 11.13.6, 13.14.1, 18.13.14, 21.12.4, 21.13.1, 24.8.5, 24.23.4, *de Inc.* 7.24 (where he describes the *fortitudo* of Hilary)
[490] Weber, *Die Stellung des Johannes Cassianus*, 83.

II.3.7: Vainglory

Vainglory is the desire and search for praise from others for one's actions and habits. Both Evagrius and Cassian consider it to be "multiform, varied, and subtle"[491], as well as to have a special connection to the following vice, pride, because of the occurrence of both vices after the first six have already been defeated – and, for Cassian, because they occur solely within the soul and require no bodily activity.[492] These two vices prey on the good and virtuous monk prodding him to recognize his own virtue. Each vice has its trajectory off this recognition – for vainglory, it is the desire to have this recognition from other human beings. It encourages the monk to seek the priesthood,[493] to start teaching (most likely before being ready),[494] and desire to perform miracles.[495] Vainglory makes use of ascetic labour and twists virtue to its own ends eventually destroying the soul of the monk by the very thing that should be his salvation. Cassian describes it thus:

> "All the other vices weaken when they have been overcome, and once they have been conquered they grow feebler with each passing day, diminishing and subsiding with respect to both place and time, or at least they are more easily guarded against and avoided when they are opposed by their opposite virtues. But when this one has been thrown down it rises again to fight more violently, and when it is thought to be destroyed it recovers, all the more alive for having died. The other kinds of vices are accustomed to attack only those whom they can overcome in the struggle. But this one pursues its conquerors all the more hotly, and the more forcefully it has been struck the more vehemently does it wage its assault in the very pride (*elatione*) of victory. Such is the enemy's subtlety that it causes the soldier of Christ, whom he could not overcome with hostile arms, to fall by his own weapons."[496]

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[491] Cassian, *Inst.* 11.1; also cf. *Inst.* 11.2, 11.3, 11.19.1, and *Conf.* 5.11.8; For Evagrius, cf. *Vices* 7
[492] cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 5.3, 5.7.1
[493] cf. Cassian, *Inst*. 11.14, 11.18, and *Conf.* 5.12.1; Evagrius, *Antirrhetikos* 7.3, 7.8, 7.26, 7.36, 7.40; *Praktikos* 13; *On Thoughts* 21, 28
[494] cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 14.17.1-5, 19.3.1-3; Evagrius, *Antirrhetikos* 7.1, 7.9, 7.10, 7.13, 7.29, 7.41; *On the Faith* 26
[495] cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 15.7.1-5; Evagrius, *Antirrhetikos* 7.35, 7.42; *Praktikos* 13; *On Thoughts* 28
[496] Cassian, *Inst.* 11.7; In *Institutes* 11, Cassian often uses *elatio* to refer to the "lifting up" that happens after this recognition of one's own strength or virtue. He does not mention the eighth vice, *superbia*, until Book 12, probably in order to keep the two similar vices distinguished. (*elatio* is also used in reference to *superbia* underlining its use for "lifting up" that then causes either Vainglory or Pride.)

Vainglory distorts correct practices because the monk is looking for praise or recognition for his ascetic progress. It causes the monk to be focused on wanting other people to think he is pious, good, and an example for others.

A check for the vainglorious monk is the vice of fornication. Both Evagrius and Cassian explain that the two could never be affecting the monk at the same time because they are opposites.[497] Fornication shows the monk as just like every other human being, not special at all for his renunciation. Vainglory allows the monk to praise himself for his virtue and specialness through the eyes of others. However, Cassian does state that vainglory can "be beneficial for beginners" in this way because actually thinking about how others will view and judge him when he is tempted by Fornication will help him overthrow it. He even states that "for it is better for a person to be troubled by the vice of vainglory than for him to fall into the fire of fornication".[498] Because fornication is a carnal vice that should be dealt with toward the beginning of one's ascetic journey, the young monk will be more tripped up by it than vainglory, which will at least urge him to continue progressing. However, he then goes on to explain that while "it is more tolerable to be subject to the vice of vainglory than to that of fornication, yet it is more difficult to escape from the domination of vainglory."[499] This difficulty to escape is also found in Evagrius: "It is difficult to escape the thought of vainglory, for what you do to rid yourself of it becomes for you a new source of vainglory."[500] While vainglory allows the monk to continue battling and conquering the other vices, it is also extremely difficult to escape since each triumph and success is a new occasion for it conquer the monk.[501]

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[497] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 5.12.1-2, 7.19.2, 12.6.5; Evagrius, *Eulogios* 21.22; *Praktikos* 13, 58; *On Thoughts* 15; *Excerpts* 43
[498] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.12.1
[499] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.12.4
[500] Evagrius, *Praktikos* 30
[501] For the dangers of triumphs, cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 5.10.4; and Evagrius, *Antirrhetikos* 7.54; *Eulogios* 8.8; *Praktikos* 31, 57; *On thoughts* 3; *On Prayer* 72; *Skemmata* 57; *Letter* 8, 52.5; Augustine also refers to the subordination of other vices to the worse one of vainglory, cf. *De civ Dei* 5.13

a. Vainglory and matter

Evagrius and Cassian provide very similar definitions and characteristics of vainglory; however, it is not all in harmony. First, in *On Thoughts*, Evagrius states that "Alone among the thoughts, that of vainglory has an abundance of matter; embracing nearly the whole inhabited world, it opens the gates to all the demons, like some evil traitor of a city."[502] This is then echoed in *Skemmata* 44, where again vainglory is said to have "an abundance of matter". Cassian, however, directly refutes this in *Institutes* 11.8: "But this one penetrates the desert along with him who is fleeing, and neither can it be excluded from a given place nor does it weaken if matter has been taken away." Interestingly, Cassian is describing in *Inst.* 11.8 how vainglory is singular among the vices – just as Evagrius is doing in *On Thoughts* 14; however, he refutes the idea that vainglory needs matter.

Robert Sinkewicz, in the notes to his translation of *On Thoughts*, defines Evagrius' "abundance of matter" as "an abundance of human circumstances" from which vainglory can arise.[503] This definition makes it unclear why Cassian would refute Evagrius' idea of matter in association with vainglory since he also stresses that it is "multiform, varied, and subtle" and can arise out of a number of circumstances. Kevin Corrigan may provide some further insight: "Details of this classification remain thoroughly obscure. The terms *poluulos* (much-mattered) and *oligoulos* (little-mattered) are almost unparalleled (see LSJ), although the notion of 'more or less' of body occurs in Plotinus (III,6) as does the idea of a fall into impurity involving 'much of body', association 'with much materiality' (*tô hylikô pollô*), and reception of, or transformation into, another form by mixture as with mud, dirt, or earthiness."[504] He then goes on to provide the four couplets seen at the beginning of this chapter (which do not match up with Cassian's), and to derive this idea of "mattered" from Plato's *Republic*. If we take into account that matter had a different definition for Evagrius

[502] Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 14
[503] Sinkewicz, *Evagrius of Pontus*, 269 n.22
[504] Kevin Corrigan, *Evagrius and Gregory*, 83

than Cassian, it becomes clearer. Evagrius considered the material world to come into existence after the initial Movement away from the Unity. Therefore, the idea that vainglory focuses on the thoughts of other human beings within that material world, necessitates, for Evagrius, that it is "mattered". Cassian, on the other hand, does not consider the material world to be a part of second creation whose purpose is to facilitate a return to the original Unity. His definition of "matter" is not dependant on this understanding of the material world. Though he has often been accused of not fully understanding Evagrius, I do not think that is what is going on here. Rather, he is making an indirect comment about his change in theology - a change which necessitated a redefining of certain Evagrian ideas.

Evagrius also considers vainglory to be one of the three on the front line of battle. In *On Thoughts* 1, he explains that these three are gluttony, avarice, and vainglory.[505] He interprets them at the vices with which the Devil tempted Jesus. These three vices are such that "no one can fall into a demon's power, unless he has first been wounded by those in the front line." Cassian does not consider there to be three of the eight vices which are the "front line" of battle. He also has a different interpretation of the temptation of Jesus which gives gluttony, vainglory/avarice, and pride. Another triplet found on Evagrius that is not found in Cassian is vainglory, envy, and pride, which he calls "the three-strand chain of vices, the threefold poisonous mixture of passions, the threefold tongues of heretics."[506] Interestingly, this is in the text, *On the Vices Opposed to the Virtues*, which is the only text which gives a list of nine vices inserting envy between vainglory and pride.

Therefore, like avarice, Cassian's vainglory is very similar to Evagrius', yet differs in important ways. The "mattered" aspect of vainglory not only does not appear in Cassian, but he actually seems to be directly disagreeing with the Evagrian idea. He also does not consider it to be the third temptation that Jesus is tempted with in Luke – that is pride. This shift is

[505] This is further echoed in *Letter* 6.2-3, 19.2, and *Excerpts* 42.
[506] Evagrius, *Vices* 7

rooted in his understanding of the individual vices as well as his emphasis on pride as connected to God. Vainglory, on the other hand, is connected to the community and the cenobium as well as to human judgment – a danger that Cassian warns against in the practical life by stressing the relationship between the abba and the monk.

II.3.8: Pride

As vainglory is one outcome of recognizing one's own accomplishments and virtue, so is pride; however, instead of considering this goodness and virtue with respect to the view of others, pride leads to a conceit and arrogance that causes the monk to see only himself – whether that means that he considers himself better than the other brothers, or that he has reached his state through his own strength. The monk may judge other brothers because of his own pride, or think himself too high or good to perform certain tasks. Again, where vainglory is the desire for other human beings to see and recognize one's own virtue or ascetic strength, pride blinds the monk to anyone but himself – including God. Both Evagrius and Cassian state that the pride is in "opposition to God".[507] In fact, Cassian states, "How great the evil of pride is, that it deserves to have as its adversary not an angel or other virtues contrary to it, but rather God himself! [...] For [the other] vices only turn back upon wrongdoers o seem to committed against those who have a part in them—that is, against other human beings. This one, however, of its very nature touches God, and therefore it is especially worthy of having God opposed to it."[508] The ultimate example of pride and its consequences is Lucifer, the

[507] Evagrius, Vices 9; for more instances, cf. in Cassian, *Inst.* 12.4.1-3, 12.5, 12.7, 12.9-11, 12.14, 12.15-18, 12.33.2; *Conf.* 3.15.1, 13.3.2, 22.6.2, 23.8.2, 23.18.2. In Evagrius, *On the eight thoughts* 8.2, 8.5, 8.10, 8.12; *Praktikos* 14, 33; *To Monks* 62; *Exhortations to Monks* 1.6; *On Psalms* 126:1.1; *Antirrhetikos* 8.3, 8.5, 8.11, 8.12, 8.18, 8.48
[508] Cassian, *Inst.* 12.7

angel who judged himself as virtuous and without the need for any help – including God's grace – and subsequently fell and became the Devil.[509] Cassian explains at the beginning of the book on pride in the *Institutes* that "we shall be able to learn how to avoid the baleful poison of this disease if we seek out the causes and the origin of his downfall."[510] He is an example and a learning tool, as well as a strong deterrent to the monk learning about pride. The Devil, for Cassian, has no opportunity for forgiveness for his sin of pride nor any hope for salvation in the end. This is the ultimate punishment for Cassian's monastic audience.

Understandably, since pride is about one's own judgment and is in opposition to God, the vice of pride is also closely connected to blasphemy. In the *De Incarnatione*, Cassian relates part of Leporius' speech when he was recanting his blasphemous Christological ideas. Leporius includes pride among the list of things that led him astray. In Conference Five, Cassian lists blasphemy as one of the vices that stems from pride[511], and in Conference Twenty-two, when discussing the sinlessness of the person of Christ, he states: "Whoever dares to say that he is without it, therefore, claims for himself, by a criminal and blasphemous pride, an equality in the thing that is unique and proper to him alone."[512] Evagrius as well explains how pride leads to blasphemy when he is describing the conceit of the demons in *To Eulogios*. The demons drive the monk to such pride that he believes his accomplishments are his own "with the result that he should be plunged into the depth of blasphemy, as he suggests through his insensibility that he can provide for his own assistance."[513] Both monks describe pride and its effects as the most devastating separation from God because it is a

[509] For the fall of Lucifer, cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 12.4.1-3, 12.27; *Conf.* 5.6.6, 5.7.2, 8.10.3, 8.25.4, 23.18.2; and Evagrius, *On the eight thoughts* 8.11, 8.26; *Praktikos* prol 2; *on Thoughts* 14; *Antirrhetikos* 8.56.
[510] Cassian, *Inst.* 12.4.2
[511] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 5.16.5
[512] Cassian, *Conf.* 22.12.3; also cf. *Conf.* 23.18.2: "If, therefore, this prayer is true and is uttered by the holy, as we certainly ought to believe, who could be so insolent and presumptuous, so filled with the pride of diabolical madness, as to declare himself without sin and not only to believe that he is greater than the apostles but even as it were to accuse the Saviour of ignorance and futility..."
[513] Evagrius, *Eulogios* 31.33

conscience separation – relying on one's own strength, judgment, and free will rather than recognizing any accomplishment comes only through God's grace.

Therefore, the opposite of pride is humility especially in reference to God and His grace. To provide another comparison with vainglory, its opposite is humility in reference to other human beings, but for pride it is God. For Evagrius, the symbol of this humility and "the grace of God our Saviour" is the *koukoullion,* or the little hood that monks wear. In the prologue to the *Praktikos*, he explains that those who wear the *koukoullion* sing Psalm 126:1: "'Unless the Lord build the house and guard the city, the one who does the building and the one who tries to maintain the guard labours in vain.' Such words instil humility and root out pride, the ancient evil which cast to earth Lucifer 'who rises near dawn'."[514] While the hood is also a symbol of humility for Cassian, he does not directly connect it to pride.[515] He does, however, use a different biblical quotation than Evagrius – Psalm 131:1-2 – which he also uses in Book 12 as one of several scriptural examples of pride.[516]

Cassian actually divides pride into two kinds – carnal and spiritual: "one is that by which, as we have said, those who are spiritual and very good are struck; the other is that which seizes upon even beginners and those who are fleshly."[517] Evagrius does not divide out carnal and spiritual pride, but he does mention two kinds in the *Skemmata*. Generally *Skemmata* 40-62 are considered to be quotations or reiterations of topics in *On Thoughts*, but "second pride" and "first pride" are not found elsewhere in Evagrius' works except in *Skemmata* 44 and 49.[518] In *Skemmata* 44, he says that the thoughts "without matter are those deriving from first pride", which, considered on its own, could be reference to the fall of

[514] Evagrius, *Praktikos* prol 2
[515] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 1.3; Cassian connects the hood more to the humility displayed in the "innocence and simplicity of children" in imitating their dress (because it is a small hood like children would wear). It is a symbol of those "who have returned to their infancy" in Christ.
[516] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 12.6.2
[517] Cassian, *Inst.* 12.2
[518] *Skemmata* 53 also gives another idea not found in other Evagrian works – that self love (*philautia*) is actually the first vice after which the other eight follow. Harmless and Fitzgerald note that this "claim seems almost 'Augustinian'", cf. Harmless & Fitzgerald, "The Sapphire Light of the Mind: the Skemmata of Evagrius Ponticus", *Theological Studies* 62, no.3, 2001, 511.

Lucifer traditionally being before that of Adam and Eve. However, Evagrius does not speak of pride as first in time and origin, nor does he place the same emphasis on the story of Adam and Eve in the corruption of man in his writings. Nevertheless, when *Skemmata* 44 is taken into account with what follows in 49, it seems that it could be connected to the idea of first and second pride. *Skemmata* 49 states:

> "Among the impure thoughts, some show God to be unjust, some as being partial, some as powerless, and others as merciless: unjust, those proceeding from fornication and vainglory; partial, those deriving from secondary pride; powerless, those deriving from original pride; merciless, the rest."

For Evagrius, the only distinction he gives between the two kinds of pride is that one causes the monk to consider God to be partial, or unfair, and the other powerless, which fits into the definition already established of denying God's grace and recognizing one's own strength instead.

Cassian's definitions of the two kinds of pride fit with that found in *Skemmata* 49, but are more explicit and detailed. William Harmless and Raymond Fitzgerald point out that the two prides are also developed in Dorotheos of Gaza, who was writing in the 6th century.[519] Cassian spends the majority of Book 12 of the *Institutes* on spiritual pride, but then he turns to carnal pride.[520] It is more prevalent in beginners, whereas spiritual pride is more so in the more advanced. If a monk has not wholeheartedly embraced the renunciations necessary for entering the monastery, then he has the foundations for this type of pride. In Book 4 of the *Institutes*, he warns of this pride because it may come after a renunciant has advanced in knowledge and learning. "Instead, you must abide until the end in the poverty that you professed before God and his angels, and also in the humility and patience with which you begged with many tears to be received into the monastery when you stayed outside it for ten

[519] Harmless & Fitzgerald, "The Sapphire Light of the Mind", 528 n.112
[520] Cf. Cassan, *Inst*. 12.25-26

days."[521] It is necessary to demonstrate one's humility among men before even being allowed to enter into the community. Carnal pride is a reversion back to a worldly pride in which men may judge themselves better than certain people or activities, but it is only through the renunciation of the worldly individual that the monk can progress in the ascetic journey. Evagrius warns not to take up the anchoretic life in anger, pride, or sadness, but he describes it in very different terms. He speaks instead of the visions and fearful experiences one will go through when having come to the ascetic life in that state. However, he does stress the necessity of humility and gentleness from the outset of this life.[522]

For Cassian, carnal pride influences the monk to put himself ahead of other human beings, whereas spiritual pride causes him to put himself in front of God. An important departure from Evagrius in Cassian is also pride's place in the Devil's temptation of Jesus. As seen in the vainglory section, Evagrius' three vices Jesus was tempted by are gluttony, avarice, and vainglory.[523] Cassian first gives gluttony, vainglory, and pride, but then allows for avarice to be the second temptation based on Luke instead of Matthew – which seems to be a nod to the teachings of Evagrius.[524] However, pride remains the third temptation no matter the source biblical text. Cassian's insistence on the presence of pride in the temptation of Jesus, combined with its presence in the fall of Adam as well as that of Lucifer, give pride a dimension of importance not found in Evagrius.

II.4: The curious issue of Envy

Envy is an interesting case study in Cassian. This is because he is definite on the list of eight principal vices explained above, which envy does not fit into, yet in Conference Eighteen, he describes it very similarly to pride in its devastating effects and importance. For Evagrius,

[521] Cassian, *Inst.* 4.36
[522] Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 23
[523] Cf. Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 1
[524] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 5.6.1-7

envy or jealousy is included in a list of nine principal vices in *On the vices opposing the virtues*. He places it in between vainglory and pride, calling them a "three-strand chain of vices, the threefold poisonous mixture of passions, the threefold tongue of heretics".[525] Envy is most connected with community – being envious of others, wanting honour and human esteem, feeling inferior to others. Inferiority is an important aspect of envy in Evagrius.[526] The demons are often described as being envious of men, especially those involved in prayer – the constant and uninterrupted disposition of which is the goal of the ascetic life.[527] Envy and jealousy appear most often in *To Eulogios*, which deals with the earlier stages of the ascetic life. It is most connected with relations between brothers or between men and demons. One must be envious of another. Envy places one in an inferior position because it conceives of the other as superior.[528]

For Cassian, envy is only mentioned five times in the *Institutes*.[529] It plays a bigger role in the *Conferences*, yet a full exposition is delayed until Conference Eighteen, which is the first Conference in the third part of the whole work. These later Conferences more often are connected to the later stages of the ascetic life – the contemplative stages and understanding the role of the community within the solitude of the contemplative. It is often used to describe the spiritual enemy, as in Evagrius.[530] Interestingly, both Cassian and Evagrius connect it to a fall of the Devil, but describing its role differently. Evagrius mentions the Devil's envy when describing the dangers of jealousy between brothers. Jealousy often causes one to blame another, even though it was the original jealousy that was at fault. "For this was the disguise of Satan who in the person of the serpent blamed the most high in order to attribute his own jealousy to God..." He also states, "Let him who has

[525] Evagrius, *Vices* 7
[526] Cf. Evagrius, *Eul* 3.3, 17.18; *Vices* 8
[527] Cf. Evagrius, *Eul* 17.18 (Devil), 26.27, 31.33; *On Prayer* 46, 68; *Exc* 45; *On Ecclesiastes* 25 (Devil), 46 (Devil); *On Luke* 5 (Devil)
[528] Cf. Evagrius, *Eul* 3.3, 3.4, 16.17; *Ep Fid* 4, 26
[529] Cf. Cassian, *Inst*. 2.13.1, 4.30.6, 5.21.2, 5.22, 7.5
[530] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 2.13.1, 4.30.6; *Conf.* 2.13.10, 6.10.8, 8.13.2, 16.8, 18.15.7, 20.1.5, 21.26.5, 22.3.6, 23.6.3

committed a fault not attempt to blame others or cause them to stumble in order that he might not be the only one to fall into evil: this was also the work and the origin of the devil's fall."[531] Although Evagrius states here that envy was the origin of the devil's fall, this is the only place where he attributes it to envy instead of pride.[532] In the *Conferences*, Germanus asks this question directly to Serenus concerning whether it was envy or pride that cast the Devil from his angelic station. He replies that it was pride that cast him down, but envy that caused him to corrupt men, causing a second fall.[533] Cassian clarifies the role of envy in the corruption of the Devil. However, while he clarifies the confusion between pride and envy in this instance, there are certain places where he uses similar language to explain envy as he does pride.

Where envy is connected to vainglory and pride in Evagrius' works, for Cassian, it is connected to avarice and pride.[534] In *Institutes* book seven, he explains that "certain vices, however, we say take shape without any antecedent natural impulse but by the decision of a corrupt and evil will alone (*solius corruptae ac malae voluntatis*), as is the case with envy and also with avarice itself."[535] In Conference four, Cassian describes the fall of the demons through pride as happening through "the viciousness of an evil will alone (*solius malae voluntatis*)".[536] This example taken on its own doesn't necessarily suggest anything of importance, however, when it is combined with the similarity of language and definition found in Conference Eighteen, it takes on a new level of importance.

In Conference Eighteen, Cassian builds his discussion of envy into what seems like it should be a discussion of pride. Following in the tradition of the rest of his works, he explains

[531] Evagrius, *Eul* 17.18
[532] For his attribution of the devil's fall to pride, cf. *On Thoughts* 1, 14, 19; *Ep Fid* 30-31
[533] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.9, 8.10.2-3
[534] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 7.5 and *Conf.* 5.16.5
[535] Cassian, *Inst.* 7.5
[536] Cassian, *Conf.* 4.14

that envy leads to crime against another.[537] However, here he explains that while its goal is to harm another, the envious person is actually only harming himself. This can be seen in the Devil, "for he destroyed himself before he poured out his deadly venom on the man, being his own murderer before being his of whom he was envious." From this "death entered into the world".[538] He then goes on to explain that the devil was condemned then without any hope for redemption, so does the one who allows himself to be bitten "cut off all assistance from the holy charmer".[539] As Cassian continues his discussion, he calls envy "more ruinous (*perniciosiorem*) and more difficult to purge away than all the other vices".[540] Earlier in the *Conferences,* Cassian uses *perniciosior* to describe pride as being more dangerous than the other vices.[541] In his discussion of envy, he continues on to say that "the blasphemer clearly raises himself up against God and not against a human being. He carps at nothing in his brother but his happiness, finding fault not with a human being's guilt but only with God's judgments."[542] While before envy was connected more to relations between humans, now Cassian has elevated it to being against God Himself. This level has before only been attributed to pride. The important difference between pride and envy lies in their definitions. Envy is the want for a state of purity or tranquillity found in another, where pride is the following of one's own judgment alone. Therefore, it would seem that pride must have a role here in envy being elevated to opposition with God in "finding faults not with a human being's gilt but only with God's judgments". It is interesting that Cassian doesn't include pride in this discussion when it would be expected. It is also interesting that if envy is this disastrous, why isn't it included in the main list of principal vices?

[537] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 13.11.2, 16.14.2, 17.25.3, 18.15.2, 18.15.7, 18.16.3
[538] Cassian, *Conf.* 18.16.8; cf. Wis 2:24
[539] Cassian, *Conf.* 18.16.9
[540] Cassian, *Conf.* 18.16.11
[541] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 2.11, 4.16, 4.20
[542] Cassian, *Conf.* 18.16.14

It is difficult to provide an answer to either of these questions. It is clear, however, that Cassian's ideas have developed over the time of writing the Conferences. While there is some kind of similarity and possibility for confusion between envy and pride found in the *Institutes* and the earlier sections of the *Conferences*, envy does not take on this other level until Conference Eighteen. The third part of the Conferences especially seems to be a development and inclusion of ideas not previously stated. In Conference Eighteen, we find a discussion and dimension of envy not previously seen and in Conference Twenty-Four, there is the description of the tripartite soul and the organization of the vices accordingly which also is not mentioned before this. However, when describing this organization, pride and envy are part of the rational part of the soul, whereas avarice is part of the concupiscible portion. This is in opposition to its connection to avarice found in the *Institutes*. There is a certain importance attached to envy in the tradition within which Evagrius and Cassian are working. Its place is still being worked out and is not solidified until Gregory's seven deadly sins.

II.5: Conclusion

Cassian distils, adapts, and develops Evagrius' list of the eight principal vices. Certain aspects differ based on his theology, other influences including Chrysostom and Augustine, as well as his scriptural focus for his asceticism. Gluttony, fornication, and pride are entrenched in his understanding of creation and the definition of humanity. Anger is rooted in his focus on the struggle between the outer and inner man. His description of anger is also has clear influences from the anthropomorphite controversy that Cassian experienced and during which he left Egypt for good. Cassian's entire schema of the eight principal vices is more structured, consistent, and organised than that found in Evagrius. Therefore, it is clear that while he finds his inspiration for his list of eight vices in Evagrius, Cassian adapts and

develops them into his own ascetical theology separate from that found in the Evagrian works.

The actual schema of eight principal vices is not as central to Evagrius' asceticism as it is for Cassian.[543] Thoughts, temptations, and the eradication of them in the pursuit of virtue and *apatheia* absolutely are central to the Evagrian ascetic life; however, his inconsistency in the schema of eight shows that the categorization of eight principals sins is in support of other ideas rather than a central focus in itself. Cassian, on the other hand, places a centrality on the eight principal vices in the progression of the ascetic life that is undeniable. This categorization of sin is intertwined with Cassian's definition of humanity as well as the relationship between created and Creator. It is through the discernment and understanding of each of these vices—gluttony, fornication, avarice, anger, sadness, acedia, vainglory, and pride—that one finds the definitions and properties of the inner and outer man. This then allows one to find the will that is poised between the earthly and spiritual desires of the human being and begin to align it with the will of God. For Cassian, the monk *must* understand the nature of each of these specific vices in order to progress to through the spiritual battle and the contemplative life.

[543] Cf. Stewart, "John Cassian and the Schema of Eight Principal Faults", pp.210-11

Chapter III: The Spiritual Battle

III.1: Introduction

For both Cassian and Evagrius, an essential part of working out the vices and cultivating the virtues is the spiritual battle. The practical life bolsters the defences needed for the battle. The battle has a reciprocal relationship with the contemplative life, with each allowing for progression in the other. While it is a cosmic battle for both monks, for Evagrius the spiritual battle and the monk's conquering of the vices and thoughts are centred within his cosmology, whereas for Cassian, they are more anthropologically based. It is through the understanding of the spiritual battle and each monk's theology of creation, especially, that their respective anthropologies and cosmologies are revealed. In addition, the spiritual battle depicted by each monk also has important implications on his eschatology, which will be rounded out fully in the contemplative life.

It is only through understanding one's theology of creation and therefore the definitions of angels, humans, and demons that one can fully understand the role and nature of the spiritual battle for each monk. This battle allows the monk to progress in his eschatological goals and he can only do that through understanding the nature of the beings around him who both help and hinder him. Therefore, it is necessary first to establish Evagrius' understanding of creation in order to provide a point of reference and expansion for the rest of the discussion. Then we will turn to Cassian's definition of the angels, demons, and man through Creation. Cassian specifically uses the fall of the Devil in contrast to the fall of man in order to define further the human being and his ability for salvation. The discussion will then turn to the battle between demons and men in both Cassian and Evagrius. Evagrius considers thoughts, demons, and passions to be interchangeable ideas, although he does

understand them to have distinct definitions. The basis for this interchangeability then is based on his theology of a second material creation. All three—thoughts, demons, and passions—are united by their connection to the ignorance and vice that causes one to be farther from God. Therefore, since Evagrius depicts the ascetic journey as progression away from ignorance, vice, and the demons, and toward knowledge, virtue, and the angels in order to regain the original Unity with God, he is able to speak of them interchangeably because they all represent the opposite of the direction one wishes to take in the ascetic journey.

Cassian, on the other hand, does not consider demons to have the same interchangeable connection to thoughts or vices. He internalizes the thoughts and vices creating an uncrossable distinction between them and the demons. This also has the effect of internalizing the struggle as a whole causing a greater focus on the battle between the flesh and the spirit than the battle with the demons. Therefore, the chapter will finally turn to Cassian's anthropology found in his Creation, spiritual battle, and the battle between the flesh and the spirit, as well as its effect on understanding his relationship to Evagrian asceticism.

III.2: Creation in Evagrius

Evagrius' theology of creation is an expansion and development of that found in Origen. Evagrius details his understanding of Creation mostly in two works: the *Kephalaia Gnostica*, which contains his most philosophical (and controversial) theology as well as the *Letter to Melania*. He states that there first was an immaterial creation of a multitude of intellects, *noes*, which were all equal in their knowledge of God.[544] The *nous* is the image of God, which is characterized by virtue and spiritual knowledge.[545] All the intellects, except one, fell from this original Unity through negligence and became angels, humans, and demons. In this

[544] For Origen's exposition on this, cf. Origen, *De Principiis*, Book One; and for a comprehensive study of the preexistence theory in Origen, cf. Henri Crouzel, *Origen*, A.S. Worrall, (trans.), Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989, pp.205-218.
[545] *On Thoughts* 19.11-12; cf. Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.32.

movement away from the Unity with God, the *nous*, having fallen through its own free will, was called a soul (*psyche*).[546] In a second, material creation, God, through Christ, who is the only unfallen intellect and also is united to the Logos, created a body for each soul according to the distance it had fallen from Him. This distance is measured in the amount of knowledge of God each intellect retained in the movement and contemplation is the pathway to closing it.[547] In *Kephalaia Gnostica* 3.32, Evagrius points out that "the image of God is not that which is susceptible of His wisdom, for corporeal nature would thus be the image God. Rather that which has become susceptible of the Unity - this is the Image of God."[548] It is the soul – made up of spiritual weakness as well as the image (*nous*) – that works towards the re-unification, and the body is the vessel in which it gathers and increases its virtue and spiritual knowledge. "Evagrius is quite insistent that this material creation is good and is the work of a providential Deity, offering an opportunity of salvation to his rational creation." [549]

Angels are the closest to him and received light bodies predominated by *nous* and fire. Demons retained the least amount of knowledge and therefore received dense bodies predominated by *thumos* (irascibility) and air. Humans fell into the middle of these two ranks and received bodies predominated by *epithumia* (desire) and earth.[550] This light/dense contrast between angelic and demonic bodies is also reflected in the type of contemplation natural to their rank: angels practice a "spiritual and intelligible" contemplation and demons have an "obvious and dense" one natural to them. Humans again fall into the middle, with the just drawn to the spiritual and intelligible contemplation similar to the angels, and the impious drawn to the dense contemplation like the demons.[551]

[546] Cf. Evagrius, *Letter to Melania* 26
[547] Cf. Evagrius, *Kephalaia Gnostica* 3.42: "Contemplation is the spiritual knowledge of the things which have been and will be [and] it is this that causes the *nous* to ascend to its first rank."
[548] Evagrius, *KG* 3.32
[549] Sinkewicz, *Evagrius Ponticus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus*, p.xxxviii.
[550] Cf. Evagrius, *KG* 1.68.
[551] Cf. Evagrius, *KG* 6.2

Each soul has the ability to move between the ranks through contemplation – both closer to and farther from God – until eventually every intellect will be reunited with the Trinity and vice will no longer exist, just as there was once a time when it did not exist. Virtue, however, has always existed and will always exist making it inherently part of the intellect from the original Unity – unlike vice which came about in the Movement. Julia Konstantinovsky points out that virtue and spiritual knowledge are "the core of the soul's characteristic of being in God's image." Therefore, a rational being must unite the wills of the intellect (the image), the soul (the corrupted spirit that works toward the Unity with virtue and spiritual knowledge), and the body (the material vessel provided by Christ in order to work toward salvation) through the active life and, especially, contemplation in order to ascend in the ranks and eventually reach the Re-unification. The idea of hierarchy pervades Evagrius' cosmological and anthropological system and it is the goal to abolish this hierarchy in reuniting with God. Robert Sinkewicz points out that, for Evagrius, "Salvation is thus understood as progressive transformation from one order of being to another; each transformation is decided by a judgment presided over by Christ."[552] Therefore, the fallen intellect, which has become a soul, became a rational being through Christ when he gave it a body particular to the amount of knowledge it retained in the fall, and it will also return to the state of its first creation through Christ. This ability for transformation is open to all three ranks of beings, who all need, and will gain in the end, salvation through Christ – angels, humans, and demons alike.

Through teaching that all the rational beings are fallen beings in some way, Evagrius shows that he does not teach that God created evil beings, but rather that through the free will involved in the original Movement, some of the intellects fell so far from knowledge, and are fill with such ignorance, that they deserved the cold and dark bodies characterizing them as

[552] Sinkewicz, *EP: The Greek Ascetic Corpus*, p.xxxix.

demons. Rather than focusing on the spectrum of good to evil, Evagrius creates a cosmology spread across spectrum that has knowledge and virtue on one end, and ignorance and vice on the other. Angels and demons represent opposite ends of this spectrum, with humans in the middle, which is a static state with comparable levels of knowledge and ignorance, virtue and vice. However, the *nous* is not static – at least not until it reaches the purity and stasis found in the Unity[553] and, therefore, it either moves towards the angels in knowledge through virtue, or towards the demons in ignorance through vice.

The struggle between demons and men comes from the "a great battle" provoked in contemplation, "through [the demons] wanting to prevent us from knowing, and we, by striving to learn."[554] It is a part of our nature that we struggle with the demons and look to the angels for help in cultivating the virtues and knowledge. Concerning the most famous demon, the Devil, Evagrius follows the traditional view of the Devil once being an angel – according to his Creation scheme, the *nous* that is the Devil fell once in the Movement and became an archangel, but then fell again through the vice of pride from the highest order to the lowest becoming a demon.[555] He says that this was because he "had holiness as an adjunct" and therefore was changeable or corruptible. He uses this point to distinguish between the orders of fallen intellects and the Holy Spirit who is holy in essence and therefore not changeable.[556] While Evagrius clearly identifies the Devil as a fallen angel, he is not a part of the very

[553] For the importance of stasis and movement in the ascetic journey and *apatheia* in Evagrius, cf. Mette Sophia Bøcher Rasmussen, "Like a rock or like God? The concept of *apatheia* in the monastic theology of Evagrius of Pontus", *Studia Theologica – Nordic Journal of Theology* 59, No. 2, 147-162
[554] Evagrius, *KG* 3.41
[555] Cf. Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 1, 14, 19; *On the Faith* 30, 31. Evagrius and Cassian both use the passages Ezekiel 28:11-18 and Isaiah 14:12-15. Origen seems to have been the first to connect Satan and Lucifer and therefore use the passages, Is 14:12-15, Ez 28:11-18, Job 41:1-2 (concerning Leviathan), as all referring to the fall of the Devil from the angelic heights. For more on this issue, cf. Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Satan: The early Christian tradition*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981, pp.130-1 (and especially n.59 on p.130).
[556] Evagrius, *On the Faith* 30; Humphries uses this passage to establish that Evagrius is still working within a theological conversation in which the divinity of the Holy Spirit is still being established, whereas, for Cassian, it has already been established and he assumes its full divinity accordingly making it so that he does not have any proof texts like this, cf. Humphries, *Ascetic pneumatology*, 6-7

beginning of the demons, and neither does he have an exposition on the fall of Adam and Eve itself, both of which are traditional ideas on Creation.[557]

III.3: Defining Angels, Demons and Humans in Cassian through Creation

During the intervening years between Cassian's departure from Egypt and his first publication of the *Institutes*, the controversies concerning anthropomorphism, Pelagius, and Christology change the theological atmosphere for Cassian. The anthropomorphite controversy is connected to the first anti-Origenist movement, to which Evagrius is not directly connected in primary sources.[558] However, it prompted the departure from Egypt of Origenist monks, like the Tall Brothers, and Cassian and Germanus along with them. This controversy does not change Cassian's views, as he still advocates for an anti-anthropomorphic understanding of God.[559] Then, there is the condemnation of Evagrius through his advocacy of *apatheia* by Jerome in 414, in which Jerome also negatively connects the Pelagians to the Origenists.[560] While this is not the only factor in Cassian's lack of use of the term *apatheia*, it casts a shadow on the Evagrian teachings. Not to mention, *apatheia* is rooted in the Evagrian division of contemplation into that of the second natural contemplation of the material creation—during which one cultivates *apatheia*—and the first natural contemplation of the immaterial creation through the Father. Another important factor for Cassian's understanding of Creation is the evolution of the Christological debate during the early fifth century. The fullness of divinity of the three Persons of the Trinity is no longer under debate, but rather the relationship between Christ's humanity and divinity which has important implications for the understanding of humanity itself. Evagrius' Christology is also

[557] He does not often make references to Adam, but when he does, it is in relation to Christ, cf. Evagrius, *On Eccl* 38; *KG* 5.1, 6.3
[558] Cf. Casiday, *Reconstructing the Theology of Evagrius Ponticus: Beyond Heresy,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp.46-55
[559] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 10.2-7
[560] Cf. Jerome, *Epistula* 133.3; For his continued attack of Evagris, and the connection of the Pelagians to the Origenists, cf. *In Hieremiam prophetam libri vi*, lib. 4; *Dialogi contro Pelagianos*, prol 1

rooted in his distinction between creations and stages of contemplation. This Christology no longer works with the changed nature of the theological conversation.[561] Therefore, each of these influences would have had an impact on Cassian's reception of Evagrian theology and ultimate decision to provide a different theology of Creation.

Although Cassian does not develop his ideas on Creation and the Fall through a lengthy exposition, he does have a coherent understanding that is found throughout his works. Dominic Keech faults Cassian concerning this stating that "there is little evidence to be found" in the *Conferences* outside of *Conf.* 8.11, 13.7.3, and 23.10-12 "for a full theology of the Fall."[562] While he is correct in saying that there is no "extended exegetical discussion of the narrative of the Fall", it is through exploring passages on the Devil, demons, and the existence of evil[563]; on procreation and married love[564]; on understanding terms like *carnis nostrae patres* and *animarum pater*[565]; on the guilt of the deceiver and the deceived[566]; on the anthropomorphite controversy[567]; on the will[568]; and on Christ[569] that one is able to find a full and coherent theology of the Fall – albeit it is not the straight-forward and lengthy explanation one might expect from someone like Augustine.[570] Many of Cassian's full theologies on other topics are found in the same way – spread throughout his monastic works. Even if the *De Incarnatione* did not exist, Cassian's Christology would still be clear to us from various passages throughout the *Institutes* and *Conferences* as shown by Victor Codina, Augustine Casiday, and Donald Fairbairn. Cassian isn't known for his exegetical work, but

[561] There will be a more in-depth analysis of Evagrius and Cassian's respective Christologies in the following chapter.
[562] Dominic Keech, "John Cassian and the Christology of Romans 8:3", *Vigiliae Christianae* 64, Leiden: Brill, 2010, p.289.
[563] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 12.4 & *Conf.* 8.10.1-6, 25.4; 23.3.2
[564] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 17.19.1; *Conf.* 21.9.5
[565] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.25.4
[566] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.10.3, 11.1-2; 23.11.2-3
[567] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 10.3.2, 5.2
[568] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.23.1; 13.12
[569] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 3.3.6 & *Conf.* 5.6; also cf. the Contemplative Life chapter containing Cassian's Christology, through which it becomes even clearer how Cassian understood the Creation, Fall, Fallenness, and Salvation of humans.
[570] Keech, "John Cassian", p.287.

rather his extensive knowledge, understanding, and use of Scriptural passages in order to support each topic he considers important for the aid of one following his monastic program.

III.3.1: The Angels

a. Creation

Cassian presents God's creation of the rational beings as one where the angels were created as angels before the temporal beginning of Genesis.[571] God's existence does not have a beginning or an end and is not limited to the creation of this world: "For we must not think that God first began his creation and his work with the establishment of this world, as if he did not exercise his providence and divine superintendence during those innumerable previous ages, and as if it should be believed that he had no one upon whom to confer the benefits of his kindness..."[572] Following Colossians 1:16, he states that all creation happened in Christ.[573] He is clear to point out that angels were created through Christ before this world, before humanity, and were there to enjoy the previous ages with God. They have bodies "appropriate to themselves by which they subsist"[574] which are made of a "spiritual and ethereal substance".[575] Evagrius does relate that each of the rational beings receives a body appropriate to its level of knowledge, implying that the angels, who are made up of *nous* and fire, have some kind of body. However, he also calls them incorporeal, which Cassian explicitly states is a term that can be applied to the Trinity alone.[576]

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[571] Cassian interprets this through the passage from Job 38:7 (LXX) which states: "When the stars were made together, all my angels praised me in a loud voice." cf. Conf 8.7.2

[572]Cassian, Conf. 8.7.2

[573] Cf. Conf. 8.7.4; Cassian includes the words, "*sive angeli sive archangeli,*" in his quotation of Col 1:16, which are not in the Latin Vulgate or Greek New Testament, and seems to be Cassian's own addition. This could be from writing the passage from memory or from a lost text. He later (Conf. 8.15) explains the difference between angels, archangels, powers, dominations, principalities, and thrones, so he clearly considers *angeli* and *archangeli* important distinctions among the heavenly orders created through Christ.

[574] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.13.2

[575] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.16.6

[576] For Cassian's understanding of incorporeal, cf. *Conf.* 7.13. For Evagrius' use of incorporeal to refer to the angels, cf. *To Eulogios* 1.1; *Praktikos* 56, 61, 89; *To Monks* 110, 116, 133, 136; *On Thoughts* 26, 41; *Skemmata* 1; *Exhortations* 2.4; *Letter* 56.2, 59.1; *Sch.* 2 *on Ps.* 54:7; *KG* 1.70, 1.85, 4.62, 4.86, 5.79. Evagrius actually uses

The ranks of " angels or archangels or thrones or dominations or principalities or powers"[577] are created through Christ and each angel is assigned a specific rank based on their "duties or merit or dignity". Cassian provides a description of each of these ranks. Angels are called such "from the duty of bearing messages" because, as Cassian notes, *angelus* literally means "messenger". The rank of archangel is clearly those who are set over other angels. Dominations exercise dominion, principalities are princes over certain peoples, and thrones "cling to God and are his intimate servants to such a degree that the divine majesty reposes in them in a special way as on a kind of throne, and He as it were rests securely in them."[578]

While Evagrius does not frequently refer to the ranks of angels, there are two important places in which he does refer to them. In the *Kephalaia Gnostica,* he defines an archangel as "the reasoning essence to whom has been confided the *logoi* concerning providence and judgment and those of the worlds of angels."[579] He then explains that an angel is one to whom the "*logoi* that concern the providence and judgment and those of the worlds of men" have been confided. These definitions are related specifically to Evagrius' hierarchical levels of knowledge and cosmology. In *On Ecclesiastes,* he also mentions the ranks of "an angel, an archangel, a 'throne, or a dominion'...", but here he is referring to the human will and its ability to move the human being toward those ranks or the ranks of the

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incorporeal to refer to the *nous* and that which was creation in the first creation; for more on this, see section III.5 below.

[577] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.7.4; the addition of "angels or archangels" is Cassian's in his quotation of Col 1:16. However, in *On Eccl.* 52 (6:10-12), Evagrius lists "angel, archangel, throne or dominion" with the throne and dominion referring to Col 1:16. While Evagrius is speaking in a different context, it is possible that this listing is familiar to Cassian through an Evagrian connection; however, it is difficult to say whether this is a textual connection or possibly a habit of listing these ranks together picked up from either Evagrius or even possibly the Egyptian monks in general.

[578] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.15

[579] Evagrius, *KG* 5.4

demons.[580] He does not go into the level of detail found in Cassian's eighth conference, and the context is quite different.[581]

For Cassian, it would seem that an angel is not relegated to one rank alone. Cassian quotes a passage from Daniel in which the archangel Gabriel calls Michael both the archangel and the "prince" of the Israelites.[582] Cassian also mentions the Cherubim in his works. He describes them as "the fullness of historical and spiritual knowledge, for the cherubim are interpreted as the breadth of knowledge. They constantly guard the propitiatory of God—that is, your interior calm—and protect it from every assault of the evil spirits."[583] Furthermore, in Ezekial 28:11-18, which Cassian interprets as referring to the fall of Lucifer, Lucifer, or the prince of Tyre, was a "protecting cherub" before his fall.[584]

b. The role of angels in the life of the ascetic

The angels are our allies in the battle against the demons. In the passage above, Gabriel and Michael are fighting the Prince of the Persians and the Prince of the Greeks in order to hold them back from Daniel's people.[585] Angels "have been entrusted [with] the responsibility for human salvation".[586] Cassian especially focuses on their role as mediators for God and as a source of imitation and inspiration for humanity. They are connected to virtue, but especially to the virtue of chastity.[587] In *Institutes* Book Six, on Fornication, Cassian explains that "by no virtue do fleshly human beings so nearly approximate and

[580] Evagrius, *On Eccl* 52 (6:10-12); the passage continues to the ranks of demons: "or to incline towards vice, thus completing the ignorance that makes one a demon, a Satan, or another 'ruler of this world's darkness.'" Cf. Eph 6:12
[581] While Cassian does place the role of free will in a similar juxtaposition between two opposing moral states, it is not between becoming an angel or a demon, but rather is between the flesh and the spirit. This will be expanded on later in this chapter.
[582] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.13.3-4
[583] Cassian, *Conf.* 14.10.3; Evagrius mentions the cherubim in *KG* 3.54, and also connects them to knowledge (although the first natural contemplation) in *On the Cherubim.*
[584] Cassian also mentions the seraphim in *Conf.* 23.17.2 and 23.17.7, but in the first instance, seems to be using the terms for the general population of angels in their majesty, and in the second, is quoting the passage from Isaiah 6:6-7. Therefore, he does not seem to have an actual definition and distinction for *seraphim*.
[585] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.13.1-4
[586] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.31.4
[587] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 6.6, 12.7, 12.11.3; *Conf.* 12.14, 17.19.1

imitate the way of life of the angelic spirits as by the deserts and grace of chastity..."[588] Imitation of the angelic beings runs throughout Cassian's works. When explaining the Lord's Prayer in Conference Nine, Cassian states that the line "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" is referring to the necessity of human imitation of angels. "For what it mean [...] if not human beings should be like angels and that, just as God's will is fulfilled by them in heaven, so also all those who are on earth should do not their own but his will?"[589] Evagrius also interprets this line to mean that "we pray that what is done by the mental powers in heaven may also happen on earth."[590]

It is through asceticism and the development of the virtues that one is able to imitate the angels. It is the way of life "which must be compared to angelic blessedness".[591] While the vision of the ascetic life is the imitation of angels, Cassian reminds his audience that changelessness does not even exist among the angels.[592] He says this during his Conference on sinlessness, and uses "a better translation" of Job 15:15 to support this: "Behold, among his holy ones there is no one who is changeless, and the heavens are not pure in his sight."[593] However, that does not mean that men should not strive to imitate the angelic blessedness. Abba Paphnutius reached such a level of virtue and continued to pursue "ceaseless and divine theoria" to such an extent, that "he was believed to delight in and to enjoy the daily companionship of angels".[594]

Evagrius also mentions this idea of companionship with the angels; however, he focuses on prayer as the pathway to it. The angels "encourage us in prayer and stand present with us". They also rejoice on our behalf, as well as are irritated by careless and contrary

[588] Cassian, *Inst.* 6.6
[589] Cassian, *Conf.* 9.20.1
[590] Evagrius, *On the 'Our Father'*; Casiday, in his translation of this passage, notes that it is clear from the context that the "mental powers" refers to the angels, cf. Casiday, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.228 n.10
[591] Cassian, *Conf.* 19.5.1; also cf. *Conf.* 23.16.2: "those who seek to imitate the holiness of the angels and desire to cling constantly to the Lord..."
[592] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 6.16; Stewart relates this to Origen, *De Principiis* I.5.3, II.9.6; cf. Stewart, "John Cassian and the Schema of Eight Principal Faults", p.215
[593] Cassian, *Conf.* 23.8.2
[594] Cassian, *Conf.* 3.1.2-3

thoughts.[595] In *On proverbs*, Evagrius notes that each human is given an angel in childhood and the impure person is separated even from this angel, implying that one particular angel stays with each person longer than any other helping him on his path to salvation.[596] For Evagrius, prayer is the pathway to equality with the angels through the development of spiritual knowledge.[597] "Whoever will have obtained spiritual knowledge will help the holy angels and will return reasoning souls from vice to virtue and from ignorance to knowledge."[598] As is found in Cassian's works, angels are not incapable of evil, as seen in the fall of certain angels to demons.[599] However, it is important to note that for Evagrius, the movement between the three rational beings is more natural than in Cassian. While the fall of the angels to demons is grave in Evagrius, it is even more grievous in Cassian's theology because he does not have this natural movement found in the elder monk's theology.

Following from this, the imitation of the angels has a different eschatological implication for Cassian than it does for Evagrius. Imitating or becoming an angel for Evagrius means ascending in rank, but it is still a rank separated from God – a rank not a part of the final goal of the Unity. Whereas, for Cassian, the angels were created as angels, and there is no fallenness to their definition, meaning that there is no separation from God. This means that the imitation of the angels, friendship with the angels, and becoming a citizen in the heavenly city where the angels reside are part of the final eschatological goal. Therefore, for Cassian, the angels represent a higher and closer relationship with God than in Evagrius.

III.3.2: Demons

a. Creation and Fall

[595] Evagrius, *On Prayer* 81; also cf. *KG* 6.86, 6.88; *On Eccl* 31
[596] Cf. Evagrius, *On Proverbs* 189
[597] Cf. Evagrius, *On Prayer* 113, 142
[598] Evagrius, *KG* 6.90
[599] Cf. Evagrius, *To the Virgin* 54; *On the eight thoughts* 8.11; *Epistula fidei* 31

The demons came into being when a number of angels, one of whom was the Devil, fell from their heavenly blessedness, losing the holiness with which they were created, and became filled with vice. In departing from Evagrius by stating that the angels were created from the beginning as angels and did not experience a fall in order to become angels, Cassian follows a biblically-based interpretation of creation. However, this creation presents a new set of issues and pitfalls in which the theologian must navigate; for example, Augustine, who also follows the orthodox line, has trouble reconciling the ability of angels to be corrupted with the definition of their station. For Evagrius, this is not an issue because "angel" includes a fallen, or moved, state from the beginning of its definition through the second creation. However, for Augustine, "angel" does not include a definition of movement, and therefore there is a discrepancy in understanding God's creation of them if they were created good and with the fullness of His knowledge.

Augustine holds that the angels were created with the light and darkness. As the light was separated from the darkness, there was a separation between the good and bad angels. Although all the angels took part of the light of their angelic station, Augustine states that the Devil could not have received the full blessedness of an angel because he could not have partaken in the wisdom of the good angels – otherwise he would have had knowledge of his non-eternal holiness.[600] If the angels who fell had this knowledge, then the wicked action would have had its source in God, not the angels. In order to rectify this issue, Augustine states that God "caused the devil (good by God's creation, wicked by his own will) to be cast down from his position, and to become the mockery of His angels—that is, He caused his temptations to benefit those whom he wishes to injure by them. [... God] yet had already foreseen and arranged how He would make use of him when he became wicked."[601] Augustine considers the explanation of how the angels could possibly fall to be an essential

[600] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 11.13
[601] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 11.17

part of understanding the created order of beings. He has an extremely difficult time reconciling that the Devil and the other fallen angels could have been truly blessed in light and wisdom, because if they had the wisdom of the unfallen angels, they would never have turned from God. They would have known that their purity was not their own, but was God's gift, and therefore never would have fallen to pride. Therefore, Augustine says that the fallen angels must have been different, or a lesser order, not partaking in that wisdom.

Cassian, however, does not have an issue with this.[602] He presents a creation in which the angels were created first and then humans and demons came into existence sometime after them. Although it is unclear whether the demons fell before the creation of man, Cassian does point out that the Devil certainly fell before he tempted Adam and Eve; however, he considers the Devil to have been a fully blessed and pure angel before his fall. Where Evagrius focused more on the creation and fall of all the rational beings and their collective struggle for salvation, Cassian is focused on the corruption and salvation of humanity. A concern shared by Augustine, but Cassian's understanding of how and what was corrupted in the Fall gives him a different explanation of Grace and Free Will as well as the ability for good or evil in rational beings than in Augustine.[603] Augustine cannot reconcile the ability for evil in a being fully in God's grace, whereas Cassian gives more freedom to the ability of the will – both for good and evil. His exposition on the fall of the Devil and subsequently on the fall of Man allows him to draw a clear distinction between demons and men as well as to define foundations of the relationship between Grace and the Will which he explicitly expounds on in Conference Thirteen.

[602] It is possible that this is a remnant of his Evagrian education not to have an issue with the ability of corruption in the angels; however, what would be more beneficial in understanding this issue would be an investigation into the relationship between Creator and created in Augustine and Cassian in order to find the comparative theological details that account for each theologian's point of view on this issue.
[603] For an excellent exposition on this idea, cf. Conrad Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2000, pp.49-50

Cassian, like Evagrius and Origen before him, uses the scriptural passages Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekial 28:11-18, as well as Revelations 12:4, Jude 6, Psalms 82:7, and Luke 10:18 to expound on the fall of the Devil and the demons.[604] However, instead of merely identifying pride as the vice that led to the fall of the archangel as Evagrius does, Cassian emphasizes the prior blessedness of the Devil when he was an angel and through this he shows how grievous was Lucifer's turning away from God as well as how devastating are the effects of pride. After their fall, they then organized themselves into an imitation of the ranks they held in heaven, with Lucifer, the Devil, as one of their princes, not their leader.[605] According to Cassian, because the demons were once angels, they retained a similar body – invisible and swift, with which they are able to attack men in order to accomplish their goal of preventing the salvation the demons themselves will never receive.[606]

Through interpreting biblical passages and investigating the origin of the Devil and his sin of pride,[607] Cassian is able not only to give an origin story for the angels and demons, but also give a clearer understanding to the current state of men. Lucifer, the archangel, falls from heaven because of his pride, but then after he had already fallen, he becomes envious of Adam and Eve and leads them to their grievous transgression condemning the race of men.[608] Cassian explains that he must have already fallen when he tempted Adam and Eve as a serpent since "Scripture would not have designated a good angel by such a term [as *serpens*]."[609] However, the Devil retained a certain rightness, *rectum*, which allowed him to

[604] Cf. Cassian, *Inst*. 12.4.1-2; *Conf.* 8.7.4, 8.8.1; Evagrius, *On the Eight Thoughts* 8.11; *Praktikos prol* 2; *On Thoughts* 19; *Epistula fidei* 31; and Origen, *De Principiis* I.5.5-6
[605] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.8.4; Cassian interprets the ranks from Eph 6:12 and Col 1:16; also cf. Kathryn Hager, "Lucifer in John Cassian"
[606] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.12.1
[607] For more on the Devil specifically in Evagrius and Cassian, cf. Kathryn Hager, "John Cassian: The Devil in the Details", in *Studia Patristica* 64
[608] Augustine also considers the Devil to have first fallen by pride and then to be spurred by envy in his temptation of Adam and Eve, cf. *De Genesi ad litteram* 11.16.21
[609] Conf. 8.10.1; As stated already, Evagrius does not mentioned the tempting of Adam and Eve at all and so does not expound on the term *serpens* for the Devil. Augustine considers the Devil to have possessed the serpent, cf. *De Gen. ad litt.* 11.2-3, 12, 27-30, 36.

be able to converse with Eve and lead her and Adam into temptation.[610] The Devil first tempted with gluttony, then vainglory, and finally pride.[611] Through his role in the corruption of humanity, therefore, the Devil actually experienced two falls: "he had already fallen a first time by pride, for which he deserved to be called a serpent, and a second fall followed as a result of envy," which caused him to never again be able to "look up and go about erect, but he would cling to the ground and creep along; flat on his stomach, he would feed upon the earthly food and works of the vices."[612] Because the Devil was the instigator for the downfall of Adam and Eve, he received a second destruction, but he also would forever be recognizable to men. The fall of the Devil by pride "is the ultimate origin of the disease that, once again by way of him who had let himself be cast down, crept into the first man and produced weakness and the wherewithal of all the vices."[613]

Evagrius' Devil also experiences two falls, or movements, although the stories explaining those falls are very different in the two ascetics' works. For Evagrius, the first fall comes with the Movement of all the rational beings – the *nous* that becomes the Devil is not unique or among a certain group. The second fall comes from the movement from angel to demon. It is important to note that Evagrius is adhering the tradition of the Devil to his understanding of Creation – the Devil *was* created as an angel in the creation through Christ and then fell from angel to demon; however, that creation through Christ is a second material creation and every being has the ability for salvation. This ability is one of the most controversial pieces of Origen's and Evagrius' creation theory. Therefore, concerning Cassian's two falls Devil, while it is possible that he points out this second destruction

[610]Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.10.2: *quae inveniens eum adhuc aliquid in sese rectum habentum...*
[611] Cassian talks about these three vices more in the tempting of Jesus than in the Fall of the First Adam, cf. *Conf.* 5.4.2, 5.6, 21.28.1, 22.10, 24.17; Cassian explains that the order Gluttony, Vainglory, and Pride is clear in Matthew 4:10, but that it could also be interpreted Gluttony, Avarice, and Pride if looking at Luke 4:9. Evagrius interpreted Luke 4:9 to give the vices Gluttony, Avarice, and Vainglory, so Cassian's mention of Avarice instead of Vainglory could be a reference to Evagrius; however, he places Pride as necessarily the last vice. For more on this, cf. Kathryn Hager, "John Cassian: The Devil in the Details", *Studia Patristica* 64, 2013, pp.59-64
[612] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.10.3
[613] Cassian, *Inst.* 12.5

because of the influence of the Evagrian tradition, the circumstances and explanations are so different, and there is no direct correlation in how it fits into Cassian's cosmology or understanding of the relationship between the Devil and man.

b. Diversity and Organization

For this section, it is necessary to begin with Evagrius in order to illustrate the depth of detail Cassian gives that is not found in Evagrius. In *On Thoughts,* the elder monk tells his readers that there are two classes of demons: those that tempt a man like a man, and those that tempt him as an animal.[614] This is also repeated in *Skemmata* 40, but he refers to thoughts here showing the interchangeableness of demons, thoughts, and vices in Evagrius' works. He also refers to the two types in *Praktikos* 36: the demons "who preside over the passions of the soul hold out until death; those that preside over those of the body withdraw more quickly." Then, in *Kephalaia Gnostica* 1.10, he says that "Among demons, certain oppose the practice of commandments, others oppose thoughts of nature, and others oppose words about divinity because knowledge of our salvation is constituted from these three." Since these three concepts would all be part of the quest for knowledge which is in the realm of the rational human beings, these are different interests of demons who tempt a man as a man.

Evagrius also mentions two kinds of demons in a different way in *Kephalaia Gnostica* 4.33 and *Scholium* 5 *On Psalms* 62:10-11. In *On Psalms*, when defining the "foxes" in Ps. 62:10, he says, "Now the subterranean demons are here named foxes, to which the terrestrial demons will be handed over for punishment." While the "subterranean" and "terrestrial" categories of demons are unclear concerning whether they refer to actual locations or rather are being used metaphorically, when coupled with *KG* 4.33, they may become clearer. In this

[614] Cf. Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 18

passage, Evagrius continues with the idea that there are some demons even worse than others by relating that those who are wicked in death are received by merciless demons, but those who are even worse are received by worse demons for punishment.[615] Besides these different delineations of demons, Evagrius does not give much more detail except that certain demons have an affinity for certain vices in the battle against men. Some are stronger than others and they often do not even get along with each other, but the one thing they all agree on is the destruction of the soul.[616]

Cassian, on the other hand, is quite detailed and systematic in his explanation of the organization and diversity of the demons. In Conference Eight, Germanus asks how there could be such diversity among the evil spirits and where they could possibly have come from. Cassian's angels may have been created as such, but they are not unchangeable, as is clear when Serenus explains that scripture shows that "several princes" from the number of angels fell.[617] Then he explains that demons have ranks and organization through the imitation of the angelic organization because "they either continue to hold now from the station in which each one of them was originally created, or else those who plunged from the heavens laid claim among themselves, in a perverse imitation of the forces that remained there and to the degree that each had fallen into evil, to the formers' grades and titles of rank."[618] These ranks are based on the principalities, powers, thrones, and dominions enumerated in Ephesians 6:12 referring to the adverse powers, as well as Cassian's version of Colossians 1:16: "In Christ were created all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether angels or archangels or thrones or dominations or principalities or powers. All things were created

[615] It is important to note that this idea connects to what was said in the earlier section about Evagrius being clear that demons are not evil according to their nature, but the vice that is within them. In *KG* 4.59 he says that "If an essence is not said to be superior or inferior to another essence, and that a demon has been designated by our Saviour as worse that another demon, it is evident that it is not by their essence that demons are bad."
[616] Cf. Evagrius, *Praktikos* 45
[617] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.8.1-4; cf. Ez 28:11-18, Is 14:12-14, Rev 12:4, Jude 6, and Ps 82:7
[618] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.8.4

through him and in him."[619] Cassian adds "angels and archangels" to his quotation of Col 1:16 here in order to illustrate that the ranks of demons found in Eph 6:12 are an imitation of the ranks and organization of the angels they once were.

The archangels are set over certain peoples or cities, and they fight against the princes of the demons who have set themselves over certain peoples and cities. Cassian uses passages from Daniel to illustrate this.[620] Serenus explains to Germanus that when Gabriel spoke to Daniel, he tells how he and Michael had to fight the "prince of the kingdom of the Persians". Serenus explains that "there is no doubt whatsoever that the prince of the kingdom of the Persians was the adversary power that befriended the Persian nation, which was hostile to the people of God."[621] Gabriel then knows that the "prince of the Greeks appeared coming" as well and Michael, "the great prince, who stands for the children of your people" will help him fight the prince of the Greeks. This passage from Conference Eight clearly illustrates Cassian's view of the spiritual battle – while his focus is that of humans and demons in the monastic life, humans are not fighting alone against the adversary, even the archangels are fighting against the demonic princes.

These demonic princes and principalities rule over people as well as lesser demons, of which there are legions.[622] Among the lesser demons, there are many different kinds, like the *plani*, who "infest certain places and roads" are tricksters and jokers, deceiving with derision and illusions, striving to "weary [passers-by] rather than to harm them". There are some who haunt the roads who do wish to harm and "murder brutally". Then there are those demons "which ordinary people also refer to as *bacucci*" who work to corrupt the hearts of men and turn them to empty pride. Others work for lying and blaspheming, like those who influenced

[619] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.7.4
[620] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.13.1-4; Dn 10:12-14, 10:20-21, and 12:1
[621] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.13.2
[622] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.14.1; Lk 8:30. Cassian goes on to cite more Scriptural evidence of princes and rulers among demons, cf. *Conf.* 8.14.2; Lk 11:15, Eph 6:12, and Jn 14:30

Arius and Eunomius. Scripture attests to these as well those demons of the mute and the deaf, those of wanton desire and lasciviousness, and those of the night, day, and noonday.[623]

> "Their diversity is such that it would take a long time if we wanted to search all the Scriptures and to go through them individually, seeing which ones are designated by the prophet as onocentaurs, which as satyrs, which as sirens, which as enchantresses, which as screechers, which as ostriches, and which as urchins; which is the asp and which the basilisk in the psalm; which is called lion, which a dragon, and which a scorpion in the Gospel; which is 'the prince of this world', and which are referred to by the Apostle as 'the rulers of this darkness' and which as 'the spirits of evil'."[624]

Cassian is clear to root his explanation of the demons in Scripture, but also the lore of the common people.

He also tells of the vision of monk who witnessed a demon tribunal. He saw "innumerable troops of demons" coming together in front of their leader, who was "taller and more frightening to look at". The leader sat down on a throne and then all the lesser demons came before him one by one to be judged for their efforts in the corruption of men. Those who were still struggling against their chosen targets, the leader "commanded to be expelled from his presence harshly and in disgrace, as being sluggish and lazy, berating their vain efforts at great length with raging anger." Those who had been successful in their corruption were given the highest praise "as being brave and glorious warriors and an example to all." Toward the end of the tribunal, a demon relates how he has led a well-known monk astray with fornication, for which he receives "the highest praises from the prince of darkness and crowned with great glory." The monk who witnessed all of this went to find out if the demon was telling the truth about the well-known monk, because "he thought he had wished to deceive him with an old trick and to brand an innocent brother with the sin of unchastity". However, the monk found out after investigating about this that "on the very night that the foul demon had announced his ruin to the throng and to the prince, [the monk] had

[623] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 7.32.1-4
[624] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.32.4

abandoned his monastery, gone to the town, and fallen into wretched sin with the girl in question."[625]

This scene brings up an interesting point concerning the demons – they have a sense of shame, as well as triumph, which is strongly connected to a sense of community.[626] They fight amongst each other, they are an innumerable race of chaos and discord, yet the presence of ranks and organization creates a community with leaders who want to be impressed. Cassian explicitly points this out when he says, "they themselves also have a certain anxiety and sadness in the conflict" when they come up against stronger men because they do not want to return having been defeated. This aspect of the demonological community makes them a more complex enemy, but it is also adds to the worthiness of the battle between men and demons. In fact, this is a necessary aspect of a good and worthy fight. "For when a fight and a contest and a battle are spoken of, there is inevitably toil and effort and anxiety on both sides, and grief and distress awaits one of them after defeat, while joy follows upon victory." Otherwise if both sides are not equally matched in effort, it would be "a kind of unfair and unreasonable travesty of a match."[627] However, because of the nature of the demons, it is even worse for them when they are defeated by men. The demons have a spiritual substance that allows them to act as quickly as they will something, whereas men have to make allowances for the weaknesses of the fleshly body. In addition, they are defeated by a "double destruction" when conquered by men because "while human beings seek after holiness, they who once possessed it have lost it and have become the cause of man's damnation and then because spiritual beings have been conquered by fleshly and earthly ones."[628]

[625] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.16.1-4
[626] While Evagrius does speak of the emotions of demons, more often in terms of jealousy (cf. *Eul*. 26.27; *Prak* 46, 68; *Exc*. 45) and sometimes in fear (cf. *KG* 1.52), he does not speak of any sense of shame among a community of demons.
[627] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.21.1-2
[628] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.21.6

c. Invisibility

Both Cassian and Evagrius agree that the demons are invisible and give some reasoning behind it. In *On Thoughts* 19, he suggests the monk investigate "how angels and demons visit our world, but we do not visit their worlds, for we are unable to make angels to be more united to God, nor can we choose to make the demons more impure...".[629] In a similar statement, Evagrius expresses how the three rational beings see (or don't see) each other: "Angels see men and demons; men are deprived of seeing angels and demons, and demons see only men."[630] He gives some reasoning as to why men don't see demons in the *Kephalaia Gnostica* saying that while the demons have bodies which have color and form, they escape our sense "because the mixture is not the mixture of bodies that our sense apprehend."[631] They can appear in the form of men, however, and then men are able to see them, but not in their true nature.[632] Angels are also able to do this, but where demons only imitate, the "holy powers also know how to transform the nature of the body by disposing it for services that are necessary."[633] Therefore, for Evagrius, it is not in human nature to be able to sense or see the true bodies of demons – or of angels.

Where Evagrius explains what *is*, Cassian attempts to explain *why*. Perhaps as a student of Evagrius, he was unsatisfied with this statement of relationship between the invisible demons and humanity. It is possible that the development of his own ideas are shaped by the questions left unanswered by his teacher as well as the need to shape what he learned previously into an orthodox theology. Therefore, for Cassian, it is "divine providence" which has hidden them from human sight because "this air which is spread out between heaven and earth is so thick with spirits [...that humans] would be overwhelmed by an unbearable dread and faint away because of their frightening confluence and the horrible

[629] Evagrius reiterates this almost exactly in *KG* 3.78.
[630] Evagrius, *KG* 6.69
[631] Evagrius, *KG* 1.22
[632] Cf. Evagrius, *KG* 1.22; *Letter* 56.4
[633] Evagrius, *KG* 5.18

expressions that they can take upon themselves and assume at will."[634] The other possible outcome if humans could see demons is that they would develop "a kind of harmful familiarity" through constantly seeing the negative example of demonic actions and countenances. Among men, a sinful thing is done behind closed doors and there is a "certain embarrassment" about it because of this, but if humans could see these things all the time, then the bad would become more commonplace. "For no fleshly weariness or domestic activity or concern for daily bread ever makes them cease, even unwillingly, from what they have begun, unlike in our case."[635]

III.3.3: The Fall of Humanity

Thus far, we have seen that Cassian's origin for the angels and demons is quite different from Evagrus' causing the definition of "angel" and "demon" to be different between the two monks. This then changes their relationship to humanity and the nature of the interactions with human beings. Cassian also gives more detail concerning the diversity, organization, and experience of the demons within the spiritual battle. For Evagrius, the necessary fact concerning the demons is their connection to ignorance and vice in the movement away from God. For Cassian, however, they are fallen angels who represent the eternal condemnation of turning away from God. He uses the fall of the demons in order to define the fall of Adam and Eve in comparison.

Humanity was created from the material of this world and the "inbreathing (*insufflatio*) of God by which Adam was first ensouled (*animavit*)."[636] This inbreathing, which created the soul of men, is in the "image and likeness of God" and after the fall of

[634] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.12.1
[635] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.12.2
[636] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.25.4

Adam and Eve, it was corrupted.[637] The journey for men now is to regain that uncorrupted image by eradicating the vices.[638] Concerning Cassian's understanding of the Fall of Man, there are two crucial characteristics – the involvement of the serpent and Man's body. This is clear in Conference 23, where Cassian talks about the fall in terms of a transaction between the serpent and Adam. Concerning Adam's part in it, Cassian says "by eating the unlawful food he delivered over all his offspring, now led astray, to the yoke of perpetual slavery" and "Upon eating of the forbidden tree he received the price of his freedom from the serpent and, abandoning his natural freedom, he chose to surrender himself in perpetual slavery to him from whom he had obtained the deadly price of the forbidden fruit."[639] Cassian does not mention Vainglory or Pride here, he does not focus on the thought or desire within Adam, but rather his focus is on the act of eating. In that action, "by eating the unlawful fruit" and "upon eating of the forbidden tree", Adam is condemned.

One would think this focus would cause Cassian to consider the body to be only filled with weakness and damnable; on the contrary, it is both condemnable for its part in the Fall and praiseworthy in its part in our salvation. For Cassian it is a saving hindrance *because* there was an external instigation at the corruption of Adam and Eve. Where Evagrius focuses on the hierarchical nature of Creation, Cassian focuses on the dichotomy of internal and external. First there was the instigation of the Devil which is completely external to the human being. Then there was the slightly more internal, but external from the soul (where the "image and likeness" resides) corruption of the flesh through gluttony. In Conference Five, Cassian points out that the vices characteristic of the flesh, gluttony and fornication, must have something external of the soul in order to "be consummated, and thus they operate through bodily action." He goes on to say that "the first Adam would not have been able to be deceived by gluttony had he not had something to eat and immediately and lawlessly misused

[637] See section III.5.2 below for more on the "image of God" in Cassian's anthropology.
[638] cf. Cassian, *Conf.*5.6.1, 10.2-7, 11.14
[639] Cassian, *Conf.* 23.12.2

it, nor was the second [Christ] tempted without the enticement of some substance..."[640] In order to make this even clearer, Cassian shows that the angels who fell did not have an external instigation nor did they have a body that could feel the pangs of gluttony that Adam did:

> "For a spiritual substance which is free of the flesh's resistance has no excuse for an evil choice arising in itself, and thus there is no pardon for its wickedness, because it has not been provoked to sin from without, as we are, by any assault of the flesh, but is inflamed by the vice of an evil will (*malae voluntatis*) alone. Therefore its sin is unpardonable and its disease irremediable. Just as it succumbs without the involvement of any earthly matter, so it cannot obtain forgiveness or a place of repentance. It is clear from these facts that this struggle of flesh and spirit against one another which rages in us is not only not bad but is even of great benefit to us."[641]

The first vice Adam was tempted with was gluttony, which then opened him up to the other two vices the Devil tempted him with, vainglory and pride. The angels, however, did not have an earthly body that could have been affected by such a vice, and therefore their wickedness is due "to an evil will (*voluntas*) alone." Purity and virtue are sustained by His grace alone, and men must strive to continue God's will instead of following their own toward vice.

Augustine disagrees with this interpretation because he considers it to place all of the blame within the body. He actually uses the lack of flesh in the Devil in order to support the opposite point: that it is the vice within the soul – pride – that caused the corruption of men as well as the Devil.[642] Here the source of the disagreement between Augustine and Cassian concerning free will becomes clear: Augustine places the sole source of corruption in pride, a vice committed only within the soul, with no external instigation whatsoever. Pride is the epitome of turning away from God because pride urges one to consider one's own efforts separate from God's grace. Cassian, on the other hand, stresses the external influences in the corruption of Adam and Eve. Conrad Leyser points out this divergence in the original

[640] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.4.1-2
[641] Cassian, *Conf.* 4.14
[642] Cf. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 14.3.8-4.8

corruption when he says, "where Augustine had identified the sin of Adam and Eve as pride—gluttony or lust being mere consequences of their disastrous bid for autonomy from their creator—Cassian argued it was, in fact, the desire to eat of the fruit which caused the Fall."[643] However he does not expand upon the further ramifications of this divergence. These external influences split the fault from purely being in the soul itself, to being introduced by the body and then spreading to the soul – making *both* body and soul at fault in the Fall. This idea can be seen also in Cassian's explanation of the differing punishments given to the Devil, Eve, and Adam: "...although the author of a deception may be struck with an appropriate penalty and condemnation, yet the one who is led astray does not lack for punishment either, even if it is somewhat lighter than his who is the author of the deception."[644] The body may have been the author of the Fall, but the soul is also led astray and therefore deserves punishment as well. Therefore, according to Cassian, although a will can choose virtue, it is guided by grace and therefore follows God's will. The evil spirits turned from that grace, and they fell from heaven. Although Adam and Eve also were once pure beings, their fall is not as grievous because they had the involvement of the Devil and their first vice was gluttony, not pride, which is the epitome of turning away from God.

For Cassian, the origin of the demons is a crucial aspect of his anthropology because he uses his explanation of the demons and their origin to contrast with the human creation, corruption, and current nature. The difference between the fallen demons and fallen humanity is also crucial to his understanding of the will through the relationship between the human soul and body. Those who "fell from a higher order of angels" are more detestable than human beings because they do not have a fleshly body like humans.[645] The weaknesses of the flesh, i.e. the need to sleep, eat, drink, put a limit on the spirit – for good or bad; however, the

[643] Conrad Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great,* Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2000, pp.49-50.
[644] Cassian, *Conf.* 8.11.1-2
[645] Cassian, *Conf.* 4.13.2

demons, because they have a body that gives no hindrance whatsoever, are able to act "as soon as they have conceived of something wicked [and are able to] at once pursue it to its evil end."[646] The flesh provides a weakness that is pardonable for humans, which is founded in the fact that gluttony was the beginning of the Fall for men, but the absence of this type of body, the absence of gluttony, and the existence of pride alone means that the angels who fell to become demons cannot ever reach salvation. Pride is a sin against God directly; whereas gluttony weakened the human spirit which led to vainglory, which then led to pride. This distinction between the humans and demons is vital to Cassian's understanding of the spiritual battle. For him, it is a battle between two types of beings: both created good, but one had external factors (the Devil and the flesh) which led him to turning from God through pride, whereas the other sinned against God directly and has no ability for salvation. One corrupted race can be saved, and one cannot.

For Evagrius, however, the demons are one of three fallen rational beings which all have the ability to regain their original state with the Unity. Every *nous* was created in the immaterial creation and it is through the material creation that the three rational beings came into existence. Demons are the *noes* that retained the least amount of knowledge in the Movement away from the Unity. They are predominated by *thumos* and air, and have a body particular to themselves – even those who were initially angels in the material creation and who fell to become demons do not have the same angelic body.[647] Rather, they gained heavier bodies pulling them farther from the Unity. The spiritual battle in Evagrius is between different types of rational beings who in the end will all be transformed and regain their original state.

[646] Ibid; in *Praktikos* 48, Evagrius says that it is easier to sin in thought than in action which is a similar idea to the one found here. However, there is no textual similarity, and Evagrius does not connect it to the definitions of the demons and humans as Cassian does.
[647]Cf. Evagrius, *KG* 1.68, 3.34, 3.38

However, Evagrius is clear to point out that it is not by a being's nature that they should be judged, but by what is in them. In *KG* 5.47, he states: "We honor angels not because of their nature, but on account of their virtue; and we insult demons on account of the vice that is in them." To further this point, in *To the Virgin,* he says, "There is no angel incapable of evil and there is no demon evil by nature, for God made both according to his will."[648] If one considers the rational beings not by their nature formed in the second creation, but rather as levels of virtue and vice, then it is clear that all rational beings have the same core element – the *nous* – which is the essential connection with God from the original, immaterial creation. Therefore, Evagrius' cosmology is based on a very different categorization and is filled with a different set of possibilities than Cassian's.

III.4: The Battle against the Demons

Demons are an important aspect in the development of the identity of the monk in early monasticism, as can be seen in David Brakke's excellent work, *Demons and the Making of the Monk.*[649] "Evagrius Ponticus took up Antony's modified Origenism and Athanasius' dramatic picture of fierce combat and constructed a compelling and subtle demonology, by which the monk could measure his progress toward freedom from the passions and then to the knowledge of God."[650] Cassian then further develops that which he learned in Egypt to conform to and support his own ascetic theology. Many aspects of Cassian's portrayal of the demons are very similar to Evagrius'. The demons are an innumerable, invisible horde of

[648] Evagrius, *To the Virgin* 54; also cf. *KG* 4.59
[649] cf. David Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006
[650] Ibid, 6

adversaries who are constantly working against the virtuous. They are connected to heresy and the pagan gods,[651] portrayed as animals and beasts,[652] and have a foul odour.[653]

A demon may use visions, illusions, nightmares,[654] temptations to vice, or even pretend to be leading the monk on the path of virtue.[655] Cassian explains that while the demons are often in discord with each other, they come together in temporary alliances when attacking men.[656] However, a man cannot be attacked by two demons simultaneously[657] – rather, they take turns: "A spirit must set out by itself to attack the mind in such a way that if it departs vanquished it gives it over to another spirit to be attacked more vehemently, but even if it is victorious it still hands it over to another to be similarly deceived."[658]

In *To Eulogios,* Evagrius states that the demons "speak interiorly through thoughts".[659] He repeatedly uses thought, demon, and vice interchangeably. While Evagrius clearly recognized the difference in nature between these three, he uses them interchangeably because they share a similar familiarity on the ignorance and vice side of the moral cosmological schema, therefore, he refers to them in this way as they are in opposition to the goal of the ascetic life. The demons are so crafty that they can "suggest to the heart a thought that is apparently good and, immediately transforming themselves, they pretend to oppose it,

[651] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 8.22.6, 10.4.1, 10.5.1. Evagrius, *To Monks* 126; *Virgin* 54; *On Prayer* 67, 73, 115; *Letter* 55.4; *On the Faith* 9
[652] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 1.8; *Conf.* 1.21.1, 1.22.2, 2.11.4, 2.13.7, 7.32.4, 8.10.2, 9.6.1, 10.11.4. Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 12, 21, 27, 28; *On Prayer* 91, 99, 107; *Skemmata Supplement* 3; *KG* 1.33; *On Psalm* 67:10-11 (5); *Letter* 6.2.
[653] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 2.11.3; Evagrius, *Praktikos* 39
[654] The visions, illusions and nightmares of the demons are much more prevalent in Evagrius' works than Cassian's. For Cassian, cf. *Inst*. 2.13.1; *Conf.* 9.6.1, 10.10.13, 21.26.4. For Evagrius, cf. *Foundations* 6; *Eulogios* 18.19, 22.23, 24.26, 27.29; *Vices* 9; *On the eight thoughts* 8.10; *Praktikos* 8, 13, 14, 21, 54, 71, 76; *Monks* 52, 62; *Virgin* 48; *On Thoughts* 4, 6, 21, 27, 29; *On Prayer* 10, 46, 94, 97, 139; *Skemmata* 62, Suppl. 3; *Kephalaia Gnostica* 4.60; *On Ecclesiastes* 35; *Excerpts* 4, 9
[655] For demons pretending good things, cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 1.20.4-6, 2.5.3, 2.7, 2.13.3, 4.3, 9.6, 15.1.6, 16.19.2; and Evagrius, *Eulogios* 7.6, 8.8, 13.12, 14.13, 19.20, 26.27, 26.28, 27.28, 31.33; *Praktikos* 44, 57; *On Thoughts* 25, 35; *On Prayer* 72, 95, 134; *KG* 6.37; *Excerpts* 5 (cf. *Prak* 22); *Letter* 51.2
[656] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 7.19.1
[657] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 7.19.2-3; and Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 24. However, it is important to point out that while the idea of two simultaneous attacks as impossible is in both of these passages, Cassian explains it very differently than what is found in *On Thoughts* 24, suggesting that he is not relying on the text itself.
[658] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.19.3; also Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 24, *Praktikos* 59
[659] Evagrius, *Eulogios* 31.33

so that from this opposition you may think that they know even the ideas of your heart."[660] The demons are cunning and will try to trick the monk with their presentation of thoughts. While demons are beings that are filled with irascibility, who "make war on the soul by means of thoughts" – which are the means by which one cultivates vice – it can often be unclear where the lines between demons, thoughts, and the vices are in Evagrius' teachings.[661]

Cassian, perhaps through the influence of his Evagrian education, directly poses this question in Conference Seven:

> "What, I ask, is that vague and confused connection between the soul and those wicked spirits, by which they are able I would not say to be joined with so much as to be united to it, so that they can imperceptibly speak to it, enter into it, and suggest to it whatever they wish, and so that they are able to impel it to whatever they please and to see and examine its thoughts and movements, so that there is so close a union between them and the mind that, apart from the grace of God, one can hardly determine what comes from their instigation and what from our own will?"[662]

Serenus then explains to Germanus that there is a certain ability "a spirit [to be] imperceptibly joined to spirit and that it can exercise a certain hidden persuasive influence where it has been permitted to."[663] The soul and the spiritual beings – both angels and demons – have a certain affinity because the nature of the soul is similar to the nature of their substance.[664] However, each of these is still bound by a body, limiting their ability to completely take over one another. That ability is for the Trinity alone, who alone is incorporeal.[665] In the case of possession, those who are possessed by a demon are not possessed in the soul, but rather in the bodily organs in which the "the soul's vigor is

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[660] Evagrius, *To Eulogios* 13.12
[661] Evagrius, *To Eulogios* 15.15
[662] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.9
[663] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.10; The second half of this quote, "where it has been permitted to" and the role of God's grace will be taken up later in this chapter.
[664] It is important to note here that for Evagrius, the affinity between humans and angels is that they both have a *nous* at their core, but for Cassian, the soul has a nature similar to the nature of the angelic substance.
[665] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 7.10, 7.13.1-2; Cassian's use of incorporeal as referring only to the Trinity is important here. Evagrius uses incorporeal to refer to the angels, cf. . *To Eulogios* 1.1; *Praktikos* 56, 61, 89; *To Monks* 110, 116, 133, 136; *On Thoughts* 26, 41; *Skemmata* 1; *Exhortations* 2.4; *Letter* 56.2, 59.1; *Sch.* 2 *on Ps*. 54:7; *KG* 1.70, 1.85, 4.62, 4.86, 5.79

contained" overwhelming them and "darkening their understanding". This is clearly seen in the effect of "wine or fever or excessive cold or other unfavourable conditions that are externally caused".[666]

Only God is able to contain and influence the soul against its will, as well be able to see into its depths. Therefore, the question arises as to how the demons know what temptations to attack a monk with in their battle against him. Both Cassian and Evagrius explain that the demons study the movements and reactions of men in order to figure out their weaknesses. Cassian's discussion of this concept in Conference seven is perhaps an expansion on Evagrius' in *On Thoughts* 37. Evagrius begins this passage with explaining: "The demons do not know our hearts, as some people think, for the Lord alone is a 'knower of hearts' (cf. Acts 1:24; 15:8), 'who knows the mind of human beings' (Job 7:20), and 'who alone fashioned their hearts' (Ps. 32:15)." Evagrius then goes on to explain how the demons understand the weaknesses of man through the outer indications. Cassian, as well, frames his explanation very similarly. He ends *Conf.* 7.13.3 by explaining that God alone knows the hearts of men,[667] *Conf.* 7.14 is Germanus' question about how the demons perceive our thoughts if they do not know them, and then *Conf.* 7.15 gives the explanation of how the demons watch outer indications.

In *On Thoughts* 37, he continues to give an example of the outer indications of grudge-bearing, and in *Praktikos* 47, he again states that the demons look for outer indications, but only God knows our mind and hearts completely. In *Letter* 16, he also

[666] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.12.1-2; again here we find Cassian's use of the external and internal dichotomy.
[667] While Cassian knew the teachings of *On Thoughts*, it is harder to determine whether he was familiar with the text itself; however, in *Conf.* 7.13.3, he uses four scriptural passages to support the statement that God alone knows the hearts of men, which Ramsey gives as Heb. 4:12-13, Ps. 32:15, Ps. 43:21, and 2 Chr 6:30. Ps 32:15 is also found in *On Thoughts* 37. Ramsey notes the last, *qui solus nosti corda hominum*, as 2 Chr 6:30, which, in the Vulgate is *tu enim solus nosti corda filiorum hominum*. However, Cassian connects this passage to Job, which brings Evagrius' quotation of Job 7:20 to the forefront. Interestingly, this passage in Job is not in the Hebrew or Vulgate versions, but does appear in the Greek. (cf. Migne, *De Angelis* 1.7, p.655) Augustine notes it, but he uses *scias sensum hominem* rather than *nosti corda hominum*. (cf. Aug, *Adnotationes in Iob* 7) In the Greek, the passage is ὁ ἐπιστάμενος τὸν νοῦν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, which is what is found in Evagrius' quotation as well. It is possible that Cassian is melding together Evagrius' quotation from Job and the text of 2 Chr 6:30, but it is important that this points to his knowledge of *On Thoughts* 37.

mentions this, but then gives extensive of examples of what the demons of gluttony, fornication, avarice, and vainglory might look for and find in a monk suffering from these vices. In *Conf.*7.15.2, Cassian also gives examples starting with gluttony, fornication, then sadness or anger or rage; however, his examples of what the demons see in these outer indications are substantially different. Where Evagrius says that "the demon of gluttony wants to see if the monk in his fast appeared radiant or has affected a sullen attitude, accusing his deprivation, or by a word has hinted at some such thing in an encounter so that he might hear those present say: 'He is very pale and thin!'"[668]; Cassian says, "If they see a monk raising his eyes curiously to the window or the sun or asking anxiously about the time of day, then they know he has been seized by the desire of gormandizing."[669] Therefore, while Cassian gives explanations of gluttony and fornication, like Evagrius, he explains them differently and then goes on to sadness, anger and rage rather than avarice and vainglory. It is important to note as well that Evagrius considered gluttony, avarice, and vainglory to be the first three vices from which all others follow – and Cassian did not.[670] Cassian would not have had the same focus on these three as Evagrius.

III.4.1: Vices and Thoughts

Evagrius speaks of demons, thoughts, and vices (or passions) interchangeably, but that does not mean he does not have a clear distinction between them. One example of this is from *On Thoughts* 36: "Impure thoughts receive for their increase numerous materials and extend themselves to many objects. Indeed they traverse in the intellect mighty seas, and they do not decline to undertake long journeys because of the great ardour of the passion. But those demons who have been purified to some extent are much more confined than these, as they

[668] Evagrius, *Letter* 16
[669] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.15.2
[670] Cf. Evagrius, *On Thoughts* 1

are unable to extend themselves to many objects on account of the weakness of the passion." Evagrius begins this passage speaking of thoughts, then easily slides the subject to demons and finally the passion. He clearly considers these to be so interconnected that there is not a problem in speaking of them in this way.

Each of these is distinct in nature. Demons are rational beings that are filled with vice.[671] Thoughts are both pathways to the passions and products of the passions. They are the means by which one becomes filled with a passion – or a virtue, although Evagrius generally speaks of *logismoi* in terms of the negative thoughts that lead to vice. That he considers the passions to be separate in nature than the demons is also supported by the fact that demons are rarely mentioned in *On the Vices* and *On the Eight Thoughts*. In both texts, the only time demons are mentioned is when Evagrius is describing pride. In *On the Vices*, pride is described as "demonic fantasy" and "friendship with the demons".[672] In *On the Eight Thoughts*, he says that "the soul of the proud person is abandoned by God and becomes a plaything for the demons".[673] It is only through considering Evagrius' understanding of cosmology that it becomes clear how he speaks of these things interchangeably although he also defines them separately.

In the Movement, the intellects lost the spiritual knowledge with which they were created. The angels lost the least amount of knowledge and have the highest levels of virtue in them. The demons lost the most amount of knowledge, have the least virtue (if any), and the highest amount of vice, which is part of spiritual ignorance. Men retained the middle amount of knowledge but also have a middle amount of both virtue and vice. The road to salvation, for men, is through the development of virtue: "When we are formed in the womb, we live the life of plants; as infants, the life of animals; and, as adult, we live either the life of angels or the life of demons. The cause of the first life is animate nature; that of the second is

[671] Cf. Evagrius, *KG* 5.47
[672] Evagrius, *On the Vices* 9
[673] Evagrius, *On the eight thoughts* 8.10

sensation, and that of the third is the fact that we are receptive of virtue or of vice."[674] This passage clearly shows Evagrius' way of speaking about the different aspects of life through relationships. The second creation, the material world is entrenched in that which came about after the movement. Virtue has always existed, but vice has not, and in the end, vice will no longer exist, just as the definitions between the three types of rational beings, names, numbers, bodies, will no longer exist after salvation. Virtue, however, will remain because it is part of spiritual knowledge.

The monk is working to regain the original spiritual knowledge of his *nous* by separating himself from the material world as much as he can while still in the material world.[675] In further support of the Evagrian idea that angels and demons are on opposite ends of a moral scale and humans directly in the middle is the passage from *On Thoughts* 8 where he explains there are three types of thoughts: angelic, human, and demonic. Angelic thoughts "are concerned with the investigation of the natures of things and search out their spiritual principles". Essentially, angelic thoughts seek to increase spiritual knowledge. He gives the example of gold, which an angelic thought would seek to understand the reasons behind each part of it: why it was made, why it is under the earth, why it requires such toil to obtain, etc. A demonic thought, on the other hand, "neither knows nor understands these things, but without shame suggests only the acquisition of gold and predicts the enjoyment and esteem that will come from this." The demonic thought is only concerned with the benefits within the social, material world, and not with attempting to understand God's placement of it within that world. Finally, "the human thought neither seeks the acquisition of hold nor is concerned with investigating what gold symbolizes; rather, it merely introduces in the intellect the

[674] Evagrius, *KG* 3.76
[675] Cf. Evagrius, *Praktikos* 52: "Separating body from soul belongs solely to the one who joined them together; but separating soul from body belongs also to one who longs for virtue. Our fathers call anachoresis a meditation on death and a flight from the body."

simple form of gold separate from any passion of greed." The human thought is neutral, indifferent in the cosmic, moral hierarchy of the material world.

He develops this idea further in *On Thoughts* 31, where he explains how each of these three types of thoughts are related to each other. Three thoughts oppose the demonic thought: "the angelic thought, that which proceeds from our free choice when it leans towards the better, and that which is furnished by human nature".[676] Two thoughts oppose the angelic thought: "the demonic thought and that which proceeds from our free choice when it inclines toward the worse." Importantly, Evagrius also states that "no evil thought derives from our nature, for we were not created evil from the beginning". Demons *were* created as the lowest form of rational being from the beginning of the distinction between rational beings; therefore, an evil thought can be termed "demonic". There is no issue for Evagrius in God "creating" evil, because his terminology is based on movement and a distance from God which is determined by knowledge/virtue or ignorance/vice; however, the lower end of that spectrum will be abolished in the end when the second material creation has ended and there is a return of every created *nous* to the original Unity.

Cassian also explains that there are three sources of thoughts: God, men, and the devil. Those from God occur when He "deigns to visit us by the illumination of the Holy Spirit", He chastens with "salutary compunction", or changes one's inclination to good acts or a good will.[677] Cassian then provides a number of scriptural passages in order to support his claim that God is a source for thoughts.[678] Those thoughts from the devil happen through

[676] Also cf. Evagrius, *Praktikos* 58

[677] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 1.19.1; Thomas Humphries Jr notes that presence of the Holy Spirit in the interaction between God and men here is a crucial aspect of Cassian's development of the three sources of thoughts idea found in both Evagrius and Origen (cf. *De Prin.* 3.2.4, he says "from ourselves...by the opposing power...[and] by God or the holy angels". cf. Humphries, *Ascetic pneumatology*, pp.42-43

[678] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 1.19.1-2; Est. 6:1-10:3, Ps 85:8, Zech 1:14, Jn 14:23, Mt 10:20, Acts 9:15, and 2 Cor 13:3; the passage from Zech 1:14 "An angel said, who was speaking in me" brings about the connection of angels also being a source of good thoughts, but they are not the main source or focus as in Evagrius. Rather, they and the Holy Spirit may help as mediators between God and men in the thoughts. For the role of passages like Zech 1:14 in the debate concerning the divinity of the Holy Spirit in Cassian's predecessors, cf. Humphries, *Ascetic*

his attempts to trick and beguile the monk. Cassian defines these thoughts as ones that seem like good ones, but are actually the devil working to deceive a monk.[679] The thoughts that arise from within ourselves are those which come from remembering "things that we are doing or have done or have heard." Cassian then goes on to explain that it is necessary to study each thought to discern it origin so that a monk may not be deceived as one might be by a counterfeit coin.[680] Importantly, Cassian does not delineate good thoughts to only God or evil thoughts to only the devil, as Evagrius does. Rather, good thoughts are from God but can also be from ourselves (as well as "indifferent" ones, which are neither good nor bad), and evil thoughts are from the devil as well as ourselves. This is clear in the Biblical passages he uses to explain the thoughts "from ourselves". He cites Prov 12:5, "The thoughts of the righteous are judgments", and immediately follows with Mt 9:4, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?"[681] Cassian's use of the devil here instead of the demons also marks an important shift from Evagrius. While Evagrius does mention the devil, Cassian speaks of the devil – in a generic sense – much more often than the demons.[682]

Like Evagrius, Cassian considers that each demon has an affinity for a certain vice and a monk will not fight against one demon who is working through multiple vices.[683] Also like Evagrius, he rarely mentions demons when explaining the vices in *Institutes* 5-12 and Conference Five.[684] However, there is one instance in Conference Five in which Cassian blurs the distinction between the vices and the demons. After listing the many other vices that

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pneumatology, pp.44-45. He uses this point to illustrate Cassian's unequivocal acceptance of the full divinity of the Holy Spirit, which is connected to the evolution of the theological context by the time he was writing.

[679] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 1.19.3; he also follows this with scriptural evidence – most of which refer specifically to the devil/Satan, cf. 2 Cor 11:14, Jn 13:2, Jn 13:27, Acts 5:3, Eccl 10:4, and 2 Kings 22:22

[680] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 1.20

[681] Cassian, *Conf.* 1.20.4; he also cites Ps 76:6-7 LXX and 94:11

[682] Through searching terms (diabol*, daemon*, and nequit* + spirit*) in the Brepolis Cross-Database search tool, I found that Cassian uses *diabolus* or *diabolicus* more often throughout his works. *Diabol** is used: *Inst.* 24, *Conf.* 97 (15% of which is in Conf 7-8), and *De Inc* 11; and the two terms for the demons are used: *Inst.* 9, *Conf.* 75 (41% is in Conf. 7-8) and *De Inc* 16 times. While this does not provide a full statistic of his references to the devil or demons, it does provide a snapshot of his tendency of use for the most common terms for each.

[683] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 7.17

[684] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 5.16.1-2, 5.18.2, 5.19.2, 5.36.1 (all of which refer to the general struggle against the demons); 10.1 (the noonday demon of Avarice), 10.23 (a desert saying about work); and 12.22 (one who is consumed by pride is given over to the evil spirits)

follow from each of the eight principal vices, he says that it is clear that "these plagues are quite strong from the way that they assault us".[685] He then goes on to speak of the "innumerable troops of enemies" the Apostle mentions in Eph 6:12 and are mentioned in Ps 91:7. Both of these passages show that "they are much more numerous and powerful than we are who are carnal and earthly, since they are endowed with a spiritual and ethereal substance."[686] This is the only reference to the spiritual enemies in this Conference and Cassian never uses the word *daemon,* but he is clearly referring to them here with the use of Eph 6:12 and his final point that they "are endowed with a spiritual and ethereal substance". Cassian does not consider the vices to have a spiritual substance, but is rather talking about the evil spirits here. He had been delineating the vices and quickly slides into speaking of the evil spirits.

Interestingly, Cassian tells his readers that the demons are actually not as strong or as vicious as they used to be, which he explains is either because the power of the cross has so penetrated the desert that it has weakened demons everywhere, or "our negligence has made them milder than when they first began to attach, since the disdain to fight against us with the same intensity with which they one raged against those accomplished soldiers of Christ, destroying us more ominously with deceitfulness now that visible trials have ceased."[687] Cassian seems to be leaning toward the second reason in his explanation, which gives an important insight into his understanding of the spiritual battle. Cassian's focus shifts to the battle within the inner man, bringing the focus of the ascetic experience inward.

Because of this, Cassian is clearer in his separation of the vices and the demons than Evagrius. David Brakke points this out when he says, "Unlike Evagrius, who always had in mind the grand cosmic battle raging among the rational natures that fell from their original unity with God, Cassian devotes much greater attention to the warfare within the individual

[685] Cassan, *Conf.* 5.16.5
[686] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.16.6
[687] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.23.2

person".[688] Perhaps this is because of the "negligence" that he considers to be the cause of the weakening of the vicious and visible struggles with the demons in the desert. Men must focus inward in order to avoid this negligence and be able to contend with external foes that now are more hidden and deceitful in their attacks. Therefore, he separates the struggle with the demons from the struggle with the vices in the inner man. In book five of the *Institutes*, on gluttony, he delineates the succession of struggles. First, is the struggle against the flesh and blood – that is, gluttony. The struggle then moves inward, but only if the monk has been able to control gluttony. "For it is impossible for a full stomach to undertake the struggles of the inner man, nor is it right for someone to be made trial of by more violent battles if he can be overcome in a less important conflict."[689] Once a man has control over his flesh, then he is able to take on the more difficult struggles of the ascetic.

The struggle with the demons happens alongside and is connected to the struggle against the spiritual vices. Cassian "carefully segregates the evil spirits from the monk's interior psychology, where the more virulent and divinely sanctioned battle between the spirit and the flesh rages."[690] The monk must first contend with the flesh in order to move into the temptations of the spirit. "And if he has been unable to curb legitimate and insignificant passions that are out in the open, how will he, under the governance of discretion, be able to with against the hidden ones that itch him when no one is looking?"[691] Cassian focuses more on the battle within a man – between flesh and spirit – than the battle between men and demons.[692] Cassian does place a higher importance on the inner battle, especially when he states: "For it is no external adversary that we must fear: The foe is within us, and every day we wage an inner war. Once it has been conquered, everything that is outside will be

[688] Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk*, p.244
[689] Cassian, *Inst.* 5.13; also cf. *Inst*. 5.14-5.19
[690] Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk*, p.245
[691] Cassian, *Inst.* 5.20
[692] Cf. Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk*, p. 243-246

weakened and all things will be subdued and subjected to the soldier of Christ."[693] This is an important difference between Cassian and his predecessor; however, it does not imply that the battle with the demons is not an essential part of the monastic journey. The level of detail Cassian gives concerning the demons is evidence enough of their importance. However, his shift in focus does have important and lasting effects:

> "Where Evagrius observed and mapped the clever battle tactics of a foreign army involved in a cosmic war, Cassian examines the inner workings of human nature and the hidden places of the soul. In this way he initiates a trajectory that would eventually transform Evagrius' eight primary thoughts or demons (things external to the monk that attack him and that he must repel) into the seven deadly sins (things that originate in the monk and that he must not do)."[694]

III.4.2: How men fight against them

a. Spiritual Weapons

The struggle with the demons is portrayed as a battle, complete with weapons on both sides. The demons have darts and spears, and humans have the spiritual weapons referred to in Paul. Cassian interweaves a number of Pauline quotes in order to describe the spiritual armour.[695] For each piece of armour – the shield, the breastplate, the helmet and the sword – Cassian gives a spiritual understanding of its purpose and power.

For Cassian, the shield is faith which "intercepts the burning darts of wanton desires and extinguishes them through fear of the future judgment and belief in the heavenly kingdom."[696] Next is the "breastplate of love" which protects the inner man from the spears and darts of the devil.[697] Cassian then turns to "the helmet, the hope of salvation"[698] which protects the head, which is Christ. Therefore the helmet preserves and protects "our faith in"

[693] Cassian, *Inst.* 5.21.1
[694] Brakke p. 246
[695] 2 Cor 10:4, Eph 6:11-17, 1 Thes 5:8, 1 Cor 13:7, Eph 1:22, Col 1:18 and Heb 4:12
[696] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.5.5
[697] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 7.5.6
[698] 1 Thess 5:8, cf. Ibid.

Christ which grows in the monk through his ascetic practice and cultivation of virtue.[699] Finally there is "'the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.'[700] For it is 'sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the divisions of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart,'[701] dividing and cutting off whatever it finds in us is carnal and earthly."[702] Cassian connects the sword to Hebrews 4:12 because Paul defines it in Eph 6:17 as "the Word of God", which is then defined in Hebrews 4:12. Paul does not reference the sword in Hebrews, but is explicitly referring to the Word of God. Each piece of armour is a spiritual pillar that must be fortified through the ascetic journey in order to uphold the goal of salvation. Faith, love, cultivating Christ within oneself, and the separation from the carnal and earthly are all necessary in the journey toward salvation.

Evagrius lists the pieces of armour in *On Thoughts* 34 and *On Proverbs* 1:13 (9), and gives spiritual definitions for the sword, shield, and helmet in the *Kephalaia Gnostica*. However, there are important differences that strongly suggest that Cassian did not find his inspiration in Evagrius for his understanding of the spiritual armour. In *Kephalaia Gnostica* 5.31, Evagrius explains that the shield is "practical knowledge that guards unharmed the passible (*pathētikon*) part of the soul."[703] Although both monks attach the shield to the bodily temptations – as a physical shield protects the physical body – they each consider it to be a different spiritual idea, for Cassian it is faith, and for Evagrius it is practical knowledge. The next piece of armour, the breastplate is included in the lists in *On Thoughts* 34 and *On Proverbs* (which are based on Eph 6:11-17), but is not given a spiritual definition in the *Kephalaia Gnostica* like the other pieces. The helmet, however, he describes as "spiritual knowledge which guards unharmed the intelligent (*logikon*) part of the soul."[704] Evagrius'

[699] Ibid
[700] Eph 6:17
[701] Heb 4:12
[702] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.5.7
[703] Evagrius, *KG* 5.31
[704] Evagrius, *KG* 5.34

connection of the shield to practical knowledge and the helmet to spiritual knowledge is entrenched in his understanding of the journey toward salvation which includes working up through the levels of knowledge in order to close the distance between the *nous* and God. Finally, he explains that the sword "is the spiritual saying that separates both the soul from the body and the vice of ignorance from it." Evagrius defines the sword in a similar way to Cassian, and is probably also making the connection of Eph 6:17 to Heb 4:12; however, he is not Cassian's source. Rather, what much more convincing, is that both Evagrius and Cassian have Origen's *Commentary on Ephesians* as their source.[705] Evagrius seems to only be thinking of Origen's understanding of the armour for the sword, but Cassian certainly finds his inspiration for his definitions of the armour from Origen.

b. Discernment

Cassian stresses discernment as a necessity in the spiritual battle, a stress which is no doubt part of his Evagrian education. There are two important features of Cassian's understanding of discretion—severe asceticism, and the recognition of the influence of evil spirits. Cassian considers severe ascetic practices to often be the work of "a demon in the guise of angelic brightness" who persuades the monk towards vice by pretending to be supporting the cultivation of virtue.[706] Depending proper discernment is fostered by the Abba-monk relationship that Cassian stresses. It is through renouncing one's own judgment

[705] Cf. Origen, *Commentary on Ephesians* 6:14-17; Interestingly, however, neither Evagrius nor Cassian make reference to the proper footwear mentioned in Eph 6:15. Cassian does write about proper footwear for the monk in *Inst.* 1.9 however, and this may be why he doesn't mention it here. There is also the possibility that Cassian could be working with Jerome's text rather than Origen's, but he does not use any aspects of Jerome's own development here so it would be unlikely especially since he certainly had his own relationship with Origen's teachings, cf. Robert E. Heine (ed.), *The Commentaries of Origen and Jerome on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, 263-267.
[706] Cassian, *Conf.* 2.7

for the judgment of one's elder that discretion is established.[707] The monk must subject his will to the Abba and thereby learn how to subject his will to God.

For Evagrius, discernment is the examining of thoughts and the workings of demons in order to fully understand the source and effect of one's thoughts. Here his interchangeable use of thoughts and demons means that discernment equally applies to both. The monk must examine his thoughts in order to understand what demon (gluttony, fornication, etc) is attacking him so that he may properly respond in combat against the demon. In *To Eulogios*, Evagrius recommends a stricter asceticism in this combat.[708] Perhaps Cassian felt there was clarity needed on this recommendation. An extreme asceticism can do as much harm as a lax asceticism.[709] Cassian also stresses the importance of subjecting one's own judgment to that of the Abba in order to foster subjecting the human will to the divine will.

c. God's grace in the battle

This process of discernment also allows the monk to understand one of the most important things in the spiritual battle: the struggle with the demons is controlled by God's grace both through His presence and through His withdrawal. The main example for this is Job and the devil's request from God to be able to try him. However, while God withdrew for Job to be tested, "He gave the one who tried him as much power to try him and He also knew that he had the strength to resist, [...He] provided that the raging enemy would not drive him mad and overcome him[710]..." In fact the demons do not have any power at all to hurt a human being than what is permitted "by divine dispensation".[711] In the spiritual battle, no one can be tempted without God, no one can be deceived without assenting to the deception, and no one

[707] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 2.11.7: "For by no other vice does the devil draw and lead a monk to so sudden a death as when he persuades him to neglect the counsels of the elders and to trust in his own judgment and his own understanding."
[708] Cf. Evagrius, *To Eulogios* 13.12, 20.21, 23.24
[709] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 2.16.1
[710] Cassian, *Conf.*13.14.2
[711] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.22.1

can conquer without God. While it is in God's power to allow the demons to tempt men, it is within a man's power to consent to or reject those temptations.[712] Cassian explains that it is the role of the will to be the balance between the desires of the flesh and the spirit, but it is also necessary to the temptations of the demons. "No one can be deceived by the devil except the person who has chosen to offer him the assent of his will."[713] Therefore, it is necessary to resist the temptations of the demons immediately. Cassian says that Christ is the "most merciful arbiter and the overseer who presides over our struggle [and] balances out the strength of the contestants, repels and restrains their fierce attacks, and with the trial provides a way out, so that we are able to endure."[714]

III.5: The battle between the flesh and the spirit in Cassian

Investigating the spiritual battle allows the reader of Cassian and Evagrius to construct their individual anthropologies. Bernard and Patricia McGinn state that "Cassian's anthropology is a simplified version of Evagrius".[715] However, this is inaccurate, for it does not take into account all that is affecting the theological choices Cassian makes in his works. For Cassian, the body is the gateway to the initial corruption, whereas in Evagrius it is the result of that initial corruption. This then requires that the body be a part of the salvific process because it too will be transformed;[716] whereas, for Evagrius, the body and everything that came into existence in the second creation will pass away and the *nous* alone with be reunited with the Trinity. Cassian states that the conflict is "deeply rooted in our body, so to say, according to

[712] Cassian, *Conf.* 1.17.1
[713] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.8.3
[714] Cassian, *Conf.* 7.20.2
[715] Bernard McGinn and Patricia Ferris McGinn, *Early Christian Mystics*, p.62-3; the McGinns do qualify their statement by saying that "though in keeping with Western interests, he puts stress on monastic perfection as producing the restoration of the soul's likeness to God, especially as we pass from the negative to the positive side of practical knowledge."
[716] Perhaps this is part of the cause for Cassian's wariness of extreme asceticism in contrast to Evagrius' recommendation for stricter asceticism in the discernment and combat against thoughts.

the design of the Lord."[717] Whereas, for Evagrius, the body is the vehicle for the *nous* to regain the knowledge lost in the Movement, after which it will pass away with the material world.

While both refer to the tension between the desires of the flesh and the spirit, Cassian focuses on it to such an extent, that he subordinates the struggle with the demons. He states "For it is no external adversary that we must fear: The foe is within us, and every day we wage an inner war. Once it has been conquered, everything that is outside will be weakened and all things will be subdued and subjected to the solder of Christ."[718] This is a significant aspect of his theological asceticism. It leads the reader through a different experience by way of a different focus and orientation in his ascetic program. Brakke keenly observes that this shift means that "evil thoughts that Evagrius had seen as raindrops that could be shaken from the surface of the soul now lodged themselves in what Cassian called 'hiding places' and 'caves' of the heart."[719]

III.5.1: The Will

The will for Cassian lies between the desires of the flesh and the desires of the spirit. It "neither delights in the disgrace of vice nor agrees to the hardships of virtue."[720] Rather it

[717] Cassian, *Conf.* 4.7.1
[718] Cassian, *Inst.* 5.21.1. The statement, *Non enim nobis est aduersarius extrinsecus formidandus: in nobismet ipsis hostis inclusus est, intestinum nobis cotidie geritur bellum*, in Cassian, closely parallels one found in *Letter* 23.17 of Paulinus of Nola: *deicimus ergo hunc inimicum domu sua interitu subiugatae carnis, qua adiutrice intus in nobismet ipsis hostis inclusus intestino animam nostram bello quatit*; as well as in Ambrose *Hexaemeron* 1.8.31: *Non igitur ab extraneis est nobis, quam a nobis ipsis majus periculum. Intus est adversarius, intus auctor erroris, intus, inquam, clausus in nobismetipsis.* These textual similarities are a crucial aspect of understanding Cassian's departure from Evagrius. It is clear that he was influenced by others, though it is beyond the scope of this study to define that influence; however, what is not beyond it is the importance of the evidence of its presence. It is possible that as Cassian traveled west, he could have passed through Nola – seeing as Paulinus was a friend of Melania the Elder and Rufinus, both also friends with Evagrius. He may have been a natural first contact for Cassian after Rome. However, the relationship between the two would not have been strong as it is difficult to pin down anything concrete, and Cassian strongly disagreed with Paulinus' version of monasticism. (cf. Goodrich, *Contextualizing Cassian*) Nevertheless, this does not mean he could not have been affected by the sentiments of Paulinus' ideas.
[719] Brakke, *Demons*, p.246; cf. *Inst.* 6.11; *Conf.* 2.10. and *Eul* 2.2
[720] Cassian, *Conf.* 4.12.1

would toe the line between the desires of the two. The spirit is tempered through the weaknesses of the flesh and the flesh is tempered through the desires of the spirit. Cassian contrasts the lack of flesh in the angels who fell with the human condition – the angels did not have the flesh to hold back their will from immediately following their evil desires and therefore immediately acted upon them, condemning them forever. The human will on the other hand must balance between the two internal desires. This is quite a contrast from Evagrius' description of the will and its two poles. In *On Ecclesiastes*, he states:

> "The role of free will is to incline towards virtue, thus to be accounted worthy of the knowledge that makes one an angel, an archangel, a 'throne or a dominion', or to incline towards vice, thus completing the ignorance that makes one a demon, a Satan, or another 'ruler of this world's darkness'."[721]

This is in line with Evagrius' understanding of the spiritual battle according to his protology and cosmology. Free will for Evagrius functions between the angelic and the demonic – it inclines either toward becoming an angelic being or a demonic being.

III.5.2: Mind, soul, heart, and the image of God

One of the most crucial aspects of their respective anthropologies is Cassian's focus on the heart in contrast to Evagrius' focus on the mind. For Evagrius, the place of God is the *nous*.[722] Evagrius calls the angels incorporeal, but they are not the only being that qualifies as incorporeal; in fact, it is each and every *nous* that was created in the first immaterial creation that he calls incorporeal.[723] Therefore, the *nous* is incorporeal and this is where the image and likeness of God resided originally. The *nous* then became the soul, *psyche*, a name it received after the Movement, consequently losing the image of the God.[724] The soul includes the *nous*

[721] Evagrius, *On Eccl*. 52; cf. Col 1:16 and Eph 6:12 respectively
[722] Cf. Evagrius, *Skemmata* 20, 23, 25; *On Prayer* 57
[723] Cf. Evagrius, *To Eulogios* 1.1; *Praktikos* 56, 61, 89; *To Monks* 110, 116, 133, 136; *On Thoughts* 19, 35, 36, 41; *Skemmata* 1; *Exhortations* 2.4; *Scholia* 2 *On Psalm* 54:7; *Letter to Melania* 12; *Letter* 56.1, 59.1; *KG* 1.45, 1.70, 1.85, 2.61, 3.11, 3.13, 3.80, 4.62, 4.81, 4.84, 4.86, 5.18, 5.32, 5.50, 5.52, 5.54, 5.62, 5.79, 6.4, 6.9, 6.16, 6.17, 6.20, 6.49, 6.59, 6.73
[724] Cf. *Letter to Melania* 26

as well as the concupiscible and irascible parts, which are part of the material creation. While Evagrius favours using terms like *epithumia, thumos,* and *nous* in order to delineate the parts of the soul and speak of the interior man, Jeremy Driscoll makes it clear that Evagrius is able to deftly use heart as well. "The word *heart* itself does not stand for just one or several parts of the soul which Evagrius' philosophical language allows him to distinguish. It moves across a wide spectrum."[725] However, while he is able to easily use the term heart in order to refer to the interior man, his placement of the "place of God" within the *nous* alone has vital eschatological implications. It is the *nous* which will regain its original state of creation in connection to the Unity.

When placed in contrast with Cassian's understanding, this eschatological difference will become clearer. For Cassian, the heart also encompasses the entire inner man, including the mind, *mens*. He speaks of the heart and soul interchangeably when referring to the interior man, but it is the heart, alone, that is the place of God. It is within the heart that the monk prepares a place for either God or the Devil.[726] Therefore, his emphasis on purity of heart is the purification of the entire inner man, for the salvation of the entire inner man. This happens through the subjection of the will as learned through obedience and discretion, the controlling of the body through asceticism and the development of chastity, and the cultivation of the divine within the heart through the virtues.[727] All three of these aspects must work together in order for the transformation of the body and soul through salvation.

Furthermore, Cassian does not deny the presence of the "image of God" in fallen humanity, as does Evagrius. In Conference five, Cassian states that the image is corrupted (*violata*) through the fall of Adam.[728] Clark suggests that the comparison of the fall of the

[725] Jeremy Driscoll, "*Apatheia* and Purity of Heart in Evagrius Ponticus", in *Purity of Heart in Early Ascetical Literature: Essays in Honor of Juana Raasch, O.S.B.*, Harriet Luckman and Linda Kulzer (eds.), Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999, p.147
[726] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 1.13
[727] For the relationship of chastity and purity of heart in the ascetic life for Cassian, see Chapter IV.3.
[728] Cassian, *Conf.* 5.6

Devil to that of Adam found in Institutes 12.5 shows that Cassian here implies the complete loss of the image for Adam. She goes on to consider the other instances where he suggests the retention of the image to be a "softening" of his ideas.[729] However, as Patterson as rightfully explained, in Institutes 12.5, "it is reasonable to suppose that Cassian thought of Adam's loss in the same terms [as Satan's]. Hence there are two possible interpretations of the passage – that Adam completely lost the image of God or that he lost only the degree of wisdom and virtue that he has previously possessed."[730] I consider this to be more than reasonable. Through the comparison of the demons to men, and the evidence from Conf. 5.6, as well as *De Incarnatione* 7.6, it is clear that Cassian confirmed the presence of a corrupted image of God within fallen humanity.[731]

III.6: Conclusion

It is clear that while Cassian places a similar emphasis and description of the battle with the demons to Evagrius, the actual details and implications of that battle are decidedly different. The definitions of angels, demons, and humans vastly different, changing the relationship between the three beings: being like the angels has a different eschatological meaning since he does not consider them to also be fallen; the demons are the ultimate example of condemnation by God and therefore to be combated as a completely corrupt enemy; and finally, there is no sense of movement between the three types of rational beings. Therefore, the monk purifies the inner and outer man in order to move between salvation and condemnation through the eradication of vice and the cultivation of virtue. Through the cultivation of virtue, the monk is able to increase his purity of heart, and develop love, which

[729] Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, pp.73-4.
[730] Paul Patterson, *Visions of Christ*, p.50.
[731] See Chapter Four for more on the significance of this confirmation in light of the anthropomorphism issue and the Evagrian imageless prayer that he espouses.

is God.[732] This cultivation of purity of heart must happen in harmony with the cultivation of chastity so that the entire man, body and soul, may be transformed.

For Evagrius, on the other hand, the monk moves between two sides of a spectrum while the whole spectrum is eventually moving back toward God. On one side is knowledge, the angels, and virtue, and on the other side is ignorance, demons, and vice. The material world, including the body and the irasicible and concupiscible parts of the soul, exist only to aid the *nous* in returning to the original Unity. Abstinence and ascetic acts help the monk move beyond the body. *Apatheia* allows him to control and conquer the passions of the concupiscible and irascible. He speaks of heart in order to refer to the entire inner man, but still within this spectrum of knowledge vs. ignorance, angels vs. demons, and virtue vs. vice. David Brakke points out the ramifications of this shift from a cosmological eschatology to an anthropological one in the Appendix to his book, *Demons and the Making of the Monk*:

> "Where Evagrius observed and mapped the clever battle tactics of a foreign army involved in a cosmic war, Cassian examines the inner workings of human nature and the hidden places of the soul. In this way he initiates a trajectory that would eventually transform Evagrius' eight primary thoughts or demons (things external to the monk that attack him and that he must repel) into the seven deadly sins (things that originate in the monk and that he must not do)."[733]

The spiritual battle for Cassian is based more in his anthropology whereas for Evagrius it is based in his cosmology. Evagrius' cosmic battle allows the monk to place himself within the schema of angels/knowledge/virtue and demons/ignorance/vice – moving between the two poles in order to regain the original Unity in the final salvation. For Cassian, the battle with the demons allows the monk to enter the cosmic arena and prove himself, and this is part of an important tradition – the battle against the demons is an essential part of the ascetic life. However, Cassian also begins a change – he places a higher importance on the inner battle between the flesh and spirit which will determine the monk's strength in the demonic battle.

[732] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 16.13; more on this in Chapter IV.4.
[733] Brakke p. 246

Cassian's definition of humanity from Creation and corruption is different than Evagrius which causes his anthropology to take a greater role in his monastic theology.

Chapter IV: The Contemplative Life

IV.1: Introduction

Cassian's dependence on Evagrius along with his own innovations in his explanation of the practical life, the vices, and the spiritual battle in their ascetical connotations has clearly been established. In the chapter on the vices, there were hints of the effect of Cassian's altered theology. This then was more clearly seen in the spiritual battle, with their differing versions of Creation having a great impact on their definition of that battle, but more importantly on their definition of humanity. This changed definition of humanity has a large impact on the experience and understanding of the contemplative life. It alters the anthropological foundations for purity of heart, Christology, the experience of prayer, and salvation – in short, the relationship between created and Creator is fundamentally different. The contemplative life is centred on that relationship – it is built from it and is the experience of working to understand it both in its current state and in its salvific state.

However, even the progression of smaller stages within the ascetic life is focused differently in Cassian than in Evagrius. In *Institutes* 4.43, Cassian relates that the progression is fear of the Lord, salutary compunction of heart, renunciation, humility, mortification of desires, eradication (decrease) of faults, increase in virtues, purity of heart, and, finally, apostolic love. However, Evagrius in the prologue of the *Praktikos*, the work to which the *Institutes* is most often compared in their literary presentations of the ascetic life, states that the progression is hope, abstinence, fear of God, faith, *apatheia*, love, natural knowledge, and, finally, theology and ultimate blessedness. Both progressions contain relatively similar aspects, but order them differently. Most importantly, purity of heart and love are the end

(goal) of ascetic life for Cassian, but *apatheia* and love fall in the middle of Evagrius' scheme. This is partly based on Evagrian cosmogony – they fall in the middle because they relate to the material world and are the basis of moving from the material contemplation (second creation through Christ) to the immaterial contemplation (the power and wonder of the Trinity as seen in the initial creation). The *nous* must transcend the material world which has been provided for its redemption in order to achieve that redemption and return to the Unity. However, for Cassian, humanity was created with body and soul which were corrupted in the fall – the ascetic life is a progression towards a transformation through which the original relationship with God as a human being (not a *nous* alone) will be regained. Purity of heart and apostolic love are the goals achievable in this life through ascetic practice and contemplation.

Even the frame of the ascetic life is changed with the different understanding of Creation. Because Evagrius' understanding includes an initial single creation of all the *noes* contained in each rational being, as well as a second creation of the divisions between rational beings themselves, the higher stage of contemplation must therefore continue to the immaterial original creation to transform the *nous* and regain the original relationship with the Creator. In Cassian's understanding, the angels are created, then the human beings are created, and at some point before the corruption of men, the demons fall and come into being. Therefore, the road to salvation is the knowledge of the state of the body-soul as it was originally created in relationship to the Creator in order to purify the corrupted body-soul for the transformation that will restore that relationship. In order to fully grasp how the protological-cosmological-eschatological frame affects the contemplative life, this chapter will look first at each monk's Christology in order to understand the effect of the divergent theologies on the contemplative life, turning then to the specific areas of: the kingdom of God, purity of heart/*apatheia*, love and contemplation, and prayer.

Cassian has a different Christology than Evagrius which has its foundations in his understanding of Creation. The younger monk's Christology is also affected by the changed theological conversation by the time he begins writing twenty years later. His focus on the full humanity and full divinity of Christ is intertwined with his definition of humanity and the human being's relationship to God. This becomes clearer in the *telos* of the ascetic life – the kingdom of God. Evagrius divides the kingdom of Heaven or Christ from the kingdom of God based on his division between the second and first natural contemplation. This division in the contemplative life dictates his understanding of *apatheia*, love, and prayer. His focus is on the separation between the material and immaterial creations in the *nous*' progress toward salvation. For Cassian, however, the focus is on the human being's connection to God through the heart. Purity of heart is not a static state, but a gradual process with advances and setbacks. However, the concept, along with love, contemplation, and prayer, are all focused on the human connection to God in the heart through the stripping of worldly human self to move toward the divine human self.

IV.2: Christology

In order to understand the relationship between created and Creator which is found in the contemplative life, it is first necessary to understand how each monk understood the relationship between human and divine within Christ. The person of Christ is the prototype for humanity's relationship to the divine; how his human and divine natures interact have a direct bearing on the Christian understanding of how humanity itself interacts with God. Both Cassian's and Evagrius' Christologies are heavily influenced by their respective theological atmospheres – which are at least twenty years apart. During this interim period, the Christological conversation shifts from a focus on how Christ's humanity affects his place

within and relationship to the Trinity to the functional relationship between his humanity and his divinity *within* Christ.

The fact that the conversation concerning the relationship of the three persons of the Trinity is still unresolved for Evagrius and his contemporaries is a vital part of understanding his theological focus. Evagrius provides an exposition on the role of the Holy Spirit and the Logos in the Trinity, Christ's relationship to the Trinity, and the role of each in the life of the Christian.[734] He focuses on the preservation of the Trinity in his expression of the relationship between Christ and the Trinity. Cassian, on the other hand, is working within a conversation where the relationship of the three persons of the Trinity has been firmly established—there is no question for him concerning the status of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, he does not give a detailed exposition on the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to each other, but rather, with this relationship assumed, he focuses on their relationship to the human being.[735] This change in the contemporary atmosphere of theological controversy has a great effect on each monk's theology and therefore their understanding and expression of the contemplative life. Therefore, it is first necessary to set out Evagrius' and Cassian's vastly different Christologies in order to set the framework for the contemplative life in the kingdom of God, purity of heart, love and contemplation, and prayer.

IV.2.1: Evagrius' Christology

The Cappadocian Christological ideas helped shape Evagrius' theology since he had close ties to Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nazianzus, and possible ties to Gregory of Nyssa

[734] Evagrius explains these in each especially in three works: *Epistula fidei*, *Kephalaia Gnotica*, and the *Letter to Melania*

[735] Cf. Thomas Humphries, *Ascetic Pneumatology from John Cassian to Gregory the Great*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, pp.3-7

through them.[736] Evagrius received much of his education from Gregory of Nazianzus and also would have been introduced to the wonders of Origen's works through him and Basil. Although Evagrius took on different Origenist interests than the Cappadocians, nevertheless, the theological ideas of Gregory and Basil would have had an impact on his early experiences.[737] Evagrius continues with the Cappadocians – following Origen[738] – in considering the *nous* to be at the core of the relationship between the human and divine. It is the *nous* that mediates the relationship between the divine and human within Christ and therefore the relationship between man and Christ (and through Christ, God) because it is the *nous* that was made in the image and likeness of God. The Logos has united to the *nous* which then allows for the union with the humanity as a whole.

Evagrius emphasizes the two natures of Christ by stating, following Origen, that Christ is the only unfallen, created intellect, *nous,* which was united to the Logos from the instant of his creation. However, deviating from Origen, he considered the material world to have been created by God the Logos through the person of Christ. Konstantinovsky points out that, "Christ, then, ontologically mediates between the immaterial uncreated God and the materiality of creation. Without Christ's mediation, the path to the Trinitarian God is closed. This is why Christ is the key to how God and the world relate in continuity consistent with irreducible difference."[739] Christ is the mediator between the immaterial and material because he is the union of uncreated and created; therefore, he fashions each and every aspect of the material world, including bodies, names, numbers, worlds, etc. The need for the material

[736] Julia Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus: the Making of a Gnostic*, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2009, p.12-15; for an exposition on the idea that Evagrius and Gregory of Nyssa were perhaps more connected than previously thought, cf. Kevin Corrigan, *Evagrius and Gregory: mind, soul, and body in the 4th century*, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2009

[737] Ibid; for more on the Cappadocian influence of Evagrius' Origenism, cf. François Refoulé, "La christologie d'Evagre et l'Origenisme", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 27, Rome, 1961, pp.237-241; and Jon Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen*, North American Patristic Society Monograph Series 13, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1988, p.177-81.

[738] cf. Origen, *De Prinicipiis*, 2.6.3: "This substance of a soul, then, being intermediate between God and the flesh—it being impossible for the nature of God to intermingle with a body without an intermediate instrument..."

[739] Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.109.

world came about when every *nous* which was a part of the Unity fell away from that Unity – except the *nous* of Christ. Because of this Movement, the *noes* then received the name of *psyche*, or soul. Christ then created the material world in order for the fallen *noes* to regain their place within the Unity.

a. The Union

In order to understand Christ's role in the creation of the material world, it is important to understand the union between the Logos and the *nous* within the person of Christ. At the instant of its creation, the *nous* Jesus was united to the Logos in a union of essential knowledge. It is through knowledge that the two are inseparably united since as soon as they were united, the *nous* Jesus had the essential knowledge of God the Logos. "He dwells forever united with the Holy Trinity in a union of substantial knowledge, rather than that of being. It is through this unity with the Logos that the intellect called Jesus became uniquely anointed by the chrism of divinity and was called 'Christ'. It is also through his union with the Logos that Jesus is called 'God'."[740] This understanding is clearly brought out in *Kephalaia Gnostica* VI.14:

> "The Christ is not connatural with the Trinity. Indeed, he is also not essential knowledge; but he alone always has essential knowledge inseparably [with]in him. But Christ—I mean to say he who has come with the Word-God and in spirit is the Lord—is inseparable from his body; and by th[at] union he is connatural with his Father, because he is also essential knowledge."

By stating that Christ is not connatural with the Trinity, Evagrius seems to be making an extremely radical statement; however, understood with his cosmological and eschatological understanding, it is clear that he makes this distinction in terms of the union.

The Logos is connatural with the Father and the Spirit, but when the Logos is united to the unfallen, created *nous*, the person of Christ as a whole is not connatural with the

[740] Ibid, p.142.

Trinity. However, Christ is inseparably united to the Trinity through knowledge and therefore is separated from the rest of the created intellects. It is because of this union of knowledge between uncreated and created that Christ is able to enact the second creation of the material world after the movement of all the other intellects. He is uniquely situated between both worlds: "The Christ, [insofar as] he is Christ, possesses essential knowledge: while as creator [he possesses] the *logoi* of the ages; and as incorporeal [he possesses] the *logoi* of incorporeal [being]s."[741] While this essential knowledge which makes Christ unique among created beings will eventually be possessed by all the *noes* when they return to the Unity, it is "the more dynamic image of Christ's saving descent portrays [that] will forever remain unique to Christ: namely, the saving work of the incarnate Word of God."[742]

Following his Cappadocian predecessors and their influence from Origen – through giving Christ a centre which includes a created intellect, Evagrius immediately steers away from the Apollinarian problem because Christ has the same centre that makes up rational beings in his theology – the *nous*. However, Christ's *nous* is "special among the intellects on account of the unique degree of his knowledge of the divine" through his union with the Logos.[743] This guarantees his ability to redeem the fallen intellects while being able to remain sinless. However, when turning toward the full picture of the humanity of Christ – that which includes the body - it becomes clear that, although there are core aspects in his theology that are clearly from a Cappadocian influence, there are also core aspects that sharply deviate from his educators.

b. Christ's Body

[741] Evagrius, *Skemmata* 1.
[742] Luke Dysigner, *Psalmody and Prayer in the Writings of Evagrius Ponticus,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, p.161; Dysinger provides an excellent exposition on the four controversial *Scholia* on *Psalms* passages as well as an addition passage in order to question and more fully understand Evagrius' "controversial" Christology.
[743] Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.148.

According to Evagrius, Christ existed before the Incarnation, but there was never a time when the Logos was not united to the *nous* since that union happened from the moment of creation of the *nous*.[744] When Christ came in a complete human body in the Incarnation, it was with a complete human nature: "Just as a human consists in a corruptible body and a rational soul, even thus was Our Lord born (save for sin). In eating, he truly ate, and when he was crucified he was truly crucified, nor was it an apparition to deceive the sense of men."[745] His body was a true human body,[746] so that he truly came into human nature in order to raise it up again. Evagrius points out in the *Letter to Melania* that he voluntarily became man, died, and was resurrected: "What surpasses human nature was for a man to die voluntarily and, after his death, to rise voluntarily, without corruption and without assistance from others. God, who loves humans, became human, was voluntarily born without intercourse, died as he willed and voluntarily rose without corruption."[747] Not only did he fully experience human nature through the body and its weaknesses, but he also showed his divinity in coming, suffering, and dying willingly. As the *Letter* continues, Evagrius goes on to point out that Christ is both fully human and fully God.[748]

However, it is important to understand what being "human" meant for Evagrius. Because of his understanding of Creation, "humanity" is defined by the amount of knowledge a *nous* has and the body it has received from Christ based on that knowledge; therefore, the definition of "human" is a fallen being. For Evagrius, it is the *nous* that is the crucial aspect of union within Christ precisely because it is where the restoration to the original unity will occur. Luke Dysinger points out Evagrius' use of *psyche* in *Scholia* 5 on *Psalm* 131:7 in reference to Christ which he says "particularly emphasizes Christ's possession of a material

[744] Evagrius Ponticus, *Kephalaia Gnostica* VI.18
[745] Evagrius Ponticus, *To the Virgin* 54
[746] *KG* VI.79: "The body of the Christ is connatural [*homophues*] with our body, and his soul is the nature of our souls; but the Word which is in him is essentially coessential [*homoousios*] with the Father."
[747] Evagrius Ponticus, *Letter to Melania* 59
[748] Cf. Evagrius, *Letter to Melania* 60-1.

body and thereby his humanity, since in Evagrius' metaphysics the soul exists only in relation to the material world as an intermediary between body and *nous*."[749] Dysinger makes it clear that it is necessary to take into account Evagrius' understanding of Creation and the Movement as well as his resulting cosmology, which is portrayed when Evagrius makes the distinction between what and who Christ is in different worlds: "In this world, they were not two (God and man), but one (God for himself and simultaneously man for us); likewise, in his world, they are not two (God and man), but one God (God for himself who is God and man, since God became human)..."[750] The important point he is making in terms of his Christology as a whole is that he does not consider there to be two persons, but there is one person with two natures. His distinction of worlds becomes important when understanding the body of Christ.

As stated above, in Evagrius' theology, the body is the sign of the state of knowledge of a rational being. This then begs the question of whether Christ took on only a human body or whether he appeared to the other rational beings in a body respective to each of their states.[751] While Dysinger's quote above uses *psyche* in order to show Christ's humanity, the fullness of Evagrius' exposition is: "By 'Christ' I here mean the reasoning and holy soul who with God the Word dwelt in the life of men…" The qualification of the words "here" and "in the life of men" may be important when taken into account along with certain passages in the *Kephalaia Gnostica.* For example, when he questions whether the angel Gabriel announced to Mary the "departure of Christ from the Father, or his arrival from the world of angels into the world of men?"[752] And again when he says: "Before his coming the Christ showed to men an angelic body, and more recently he has not shown them the body he has now; rather, he

[749] Dysinger, *Psalmody and Prayer in the Writings of Evagrius Ponticus*, p.168.
[750] Evagrius, *Letter to Melania* 61
[751] In the *Letter to Melania* 63, Evagrius states, Christ "who did all these things from his love for rational beings", which implies more than humanity.
[752] Evagrius, *KG* VI.77

has revealed the body which they should [will] have."[753] This suggests that the body of Christ, his materiality, is changeable depending on the different stages of knowledge. In the resurrection, Christ gained a spiritual body which is what men will gain in their ascent toward the Unity.[754] This does not compromise the humanity of Christ in Evagrius' theology because the essential piece of creation that the Logos is united to is the *nous* of Christ, not his body. The body is the vehicle within the material world.

Therefore, the body which he had in the world of men becomes the symbol of the virtues in the Eucharist. His blood is the symbol of knowledge and through the participation in the Eucharist men can begin to participate in the virtue and knowledge of Christ.[755] Not only is Christ the perfect symbol of humanity in his complete humanity, he is also the creator of the human body. The material world was created as a result of the Movement by God through Christ. Each world, body, name, and number was for the purpose of the *noes* being able to return to the Unity. Therefore, while the body is the product of the fall and a negative symbol of the Movement, it is also "God's provision for deification" and a positive vessel for ascent.[756]

c. Deification

The idea of deification, especially in the Greek Patristic tradition, is a common one and is connected to understanding Christ and the Trinity.[757] Although there is some debate as to whether Evagrius expounded a true doctrine of deification, his Cappadocian teachers certainly did. Basil of Caesarea considered the power to deify proof of the divinity of the Holy Spirit, which happens through baptism. Norman Russell also points out that in men,

[753] Evagrius, *KG* IV.41
[754] cf. Evagrius, *KG* II.87, III.29, VI.34
[755] cf. Evagrius, *Scholia* 13 *on Eccl.* 2:25; and *Aphorisms* 18 & 19
[756] Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.126.
[757] For an excellent and in-depth study on this topic, cf. Norman Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006

although "the image of God resides in the *nous*, it is not the *nous* alone which is deified [but] the whole man [which] is transformed..."[758] Gregory of Nazianzus, who of the Cappadocians would have had the biggest influence on Evagrius, certainly developed a doctrine of deification, or *theosis*. However, Russell does not consider Evagrius to have followed in Gregory's footsteps concerning this idea.[759] Interestingly though, it is important to note that Gregory considered the body of Christ to have been deified by the Logos, and in the *Letter to Melania,* Evagrius states that:

> "He is the leaven of divinity who, in his goodness, has hidden himself in the unleavened lump of humanity. Not only did he not lose his own nature, taste and vitality, instead he drew the whole lump to all that is his. Just a little while and even leaven hidden in an unleavened lump is revealed; but after a time, even if the whole lump does not appear leavened, it actually is."[760]

The "lump" of humanity has been drawn up to all that is His – it has been leavened by its union with the divinity. Therefore, in terms of the humanity of Christ, it seems that Evagrius follows in the footsteps of his predecessor in its deification; however, it is when the question of deification is extended to men that there could be a departure. Russell considered this to be because of Evagrius' understanding of the Logos being united to the only unfallen *nous*, as well as the idea that the material world is temporal and eventually all the rational intellects will return to the immaterial Unity.[761]

Augustine Casiday and Julia Konstantinovsky both support the idea of deification in Evagrius. Casiday states that according to "the Christological parameters of Evagrius' teaching, […] deification is a consequence of the 'Holy Unity' that Christ established between the Creator and the creation."[762] Konstantinovsky further shows how it is possible to talk of the idea of deification in Evagrius because "to know God's essence/nature [is the]

[758] Russell, *Deification,* p.212.
[759] Ibid, p.238: "Although Evagrius regarded himself as a disciple of Gregory of Nazianzus, he did not adopt Gregory's approach to deification. Nor does the technical language of deification appear in his writings."
[760] Evagrius, *Letter to Melania* 60.
[761] Russell, *Deification,* p.240.
[762] A.M.C.Casiday, "Deification in Origen, Evagrius, and Cassian," *Origeniana Octava*, Leuven: Peeters, 2003, p.998.

ultimate spiritual perfection, fully attainable only in the life to come but tasted already in this present age. In the traditional patristic idiom, it is termed 'deification'."[763] Evagrius divides the ascent back toward the Unity into the second and first natural contemplations. Both of these can be obtained through the ascetic life, but one must start with the second natural contemplation – that of the material world – before he can move on to the higher form of contemplation – that of the immaterial and therefore God Himself. The body is the vehicle in which the *nous* is able to ascend this ladder in the material world, especially since it signifies the current state of knowledge of each individual *nous*.[764] In *Praktikos* 53, Evagrius states: "Those who have obtained passionlessness of the soul by means of the body (τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπάθειαν δία τοῦ σώματος) and who, to some extent, attain the contemplation of beings, recognize the grace of the Creator."[765]

Although the practical life and the second natural contemplation does not "lead directly to a union with God," it does lead to the first natural contemplation which brings one to union with God. It is "by means of the body" that one can reach apatheia and "recognize the grace of the Creator". However, "since Christ is the source of the second natural contemplation it appears that he does not directly foster deification. Nonetheless, deification is impossible without Christ, because one can only ascend one rung of the ladder at a time. […] In this respect, although Christ is neither directly responsible for nor is the object of man's ultimate perfection, he is instrumental in bringing it about."[766] Not only does Christ create the vessel in which the *nous* can ascend through contemplation, he is also the source of the first type of contemplation necessary for that ascension, or deification.

d. Evagrius' Christ

[763] Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.128.
[764] cf. Evagrius, *KG* I.68, II.68, III.29, VI.2; and *Sch.* 275 *to Prov* 24:22
[765] Evagrius, *Praktikos* 53
[766] Konstantinovsky, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.128.

Christ in Evagrius' works is one person with two natures united by essential knowledge; however, instead of being specifically divinity united to humanity, it is the uncreated Logos united to the created *nous*. The *nous* is the core of angels, men, and demons, and there is the implication that Christ took on an angelic body before he took on a human body. Evagrius fits his understanding of Christ and his Cappadocian influences into his Origenist cosmology; however he also develops the person of Christ beyond these influences. Not only does he expound Origen's idea of creation where God created the *noes* which were united to him and then who fell away, but he also considers the status of Christ's *nous* – the only unfallen one that has also been united to the Logos from the moment of its creation – to allow Christ a unique role in the second creation – that of the material world.

The idea of a creation through Christ is not at all unique to Evagrius, since at its heart the idea is from Colossians 1:16: "for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and in him." However, the idea that it is a *second* creation that Christ is responsible for is special to Evagrius. Through this role, Christ is also responsible for the second natural contemplation, after which he is merely a helper since a *nous* that has ascended to the first natural contemplation has reached past the domain of Christ; however, he is an extremely crucial helper since it is through the vehicle of the material body, created by Christ, that one reaches either the first or the second natural contemplations. What knowledge he has of the immaterial is from the unique union of the *nous* to the Logos, but it is not natural to the *nous* itself. Therefore, Bunge points out that during the spiritual battle, prayers can be addressed to Christ, but "at the higher stage of the *theoretikos tropos*, prayer is addressed to the Logos himself."[767] Evagrius' insistence on distinguishing the person of Christ and the natural properties of the Trinitarian Logos probably leans heavily on the need

[767] Gabriel Bunge, "The 'spiritual prayer': on the Trinitarian mysticism of Evagrius of Pontus", Fr. Brian McNeil (trans.), *Monastic Studies* 17, 1986, 199

to distinguish the immaterial, uncreated divinity from the created which were originally a part of the Unity and are now separate. The bridge between the created and uncreated cannot be crossed – an idea found also in Gregory of Nazianzus as well as in Gregory of Nyssa.[768] This emphasis in Evagrius' works shows a Christology with clear Cappadocian and Origenist influences that is dependent on his understanding of Creation, the Fall, and Cosmology; however, his unique development of Christ because of this emphasis places a limitation on Christ in his relationship to the rational beings and their ascent back toward the Unity by confining him as a source of knowledge for only the material world.

This distinction between Christ and the Logos in Evagrius' ascetic theology creates a contemplative experience that is rooted in the division between immaterial and material. This division creates a hierarchical contemplative process focused on the relationship between God and man in the *nous*. The expression of this relationship can be seen in the person of Christ, who, as Logos and created *nous*, is limited in his theological capacity. The movement from second to first natural contemplation then is characterised by the movement beyond Christ to the Trinity—Father, Son (Logos), and Spirit. The importance of this becomes clearer as Cassian's Christology is now investigated in order to elucidate one of the most important ascetical divergences from the elder monk through his different foundational theology.

IV.2.2: Cassian's Christology

In the time between leaving Egypt and publishing his first work in Marseilles, the Christological conversation drastically changes. As the divine becomes more defined, more complex questions, especially regarding sin and the existence of evil, begin to become more important. Christian theologians must now reconcile the human capacity for sin with the

[768] Russell, *Deification,* p.232; Although Gregory of Nazianzus was more open with his deification language, this barrier between uncreated and created is never crossed, cf. Ibid, p.214.

good, just God who creates only good. Therefore, humanity becomes more defined, and the relationship between grace and free will—the relationship between God's will and the human will—becomes a central question. One of the key areas for this question is the relationship between Christ's humanity and divinity within himself. Another important factor is that Cassian is unconcerned with preserving the three persons of the Trinity because he considers this to already be firmly established through the Nicene Creed[769]—unconcerned with possibly tainting it with the humanity of Christ like Evagrius might have been. Therefore, his Christology does not subordinate Christ to the Trinity but assumes him as fully part of it. This radically changes the relationship between human and divine in the contemplative life.

The relevance, coherence, and consistency of Cassian's Christology has had a turbulent history with lists of both supporters and detractors. Augustine Casiday gives an excellent exposition on this history as well as giving his own understanding of his Christology in the fifth chapter of his book, *Tradition and Theology in St John Cassian*. He rightly points out that one of the most important modern works on this topic is Victor Codina's *El aspecto cristologico en la espiritualidad de Juan Casiano*.[770] Codina, Casiday, and Donald Fairbairn all argue in support of Cassian's third work, dedicated to the topic of Christology, as a coherent work consistent with the beliefs already portrayed in his first two works. While the *De Incarnatione* has often been attacked for a lack of technical argument against Nestorius' views, Fairbairn, in his work, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church*, points out that in his third work, "Cassian is concerned not so much with the technicalities of Nestorius' thought as with the implications."[771] Marie-Anne Vannier also makes the point

[769] Cassian repeatedly uses the Nicene Creed, or the "Creed of Antioch", as argument against Nestorius in the *De Incarnatione*. Without offering any further philosophical or technical explanation, Cassian evidences the preservation of Christ's full divinity as is shown in the creed alone. cf. *De Inc*. 6.3, 6.6, 6.7.

[770] Victor Codina, *El aspecto cristologico en la espiritualidad de Juan Casiano*, Orientalia Christiana Analecta, 175, Roma: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1966.

[771] Donald Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, p.184. This is certainly a fair point since much of his argument against Nestorius is based on connecting him to the error of other heresies—mainly the Pelagians—and stating Scriptural passages that refute the idea that Christ could be anything other than fully divine. His technique is essentially to let the Scripture do the technical work

that Cyril is not much more precise in his terminology than Cassian, but Cyril's success is due to more than just his terminological coherence.[772] Although the *De Incarnatione Domini contra Nestorium* is not a monastic work but rather an attempt to add to the conversation, it still follows the principles of Cassian's Christology found in his Christocentric monastic works.

a. Union

Cassian focuses on the hypostatic union of Christ, but doesn't have a clear exposition on the specifics of this union. At the end of the *De Incarnatione,* when Cassian mentions other church Fathers in order to support his work, he quotes Rufinus, "'For the Son of God,' he says, 'is born of a Virgin, not chiefly allied to the flesh alone, but generated in the soul which is the medium between the flesh and God.'"[773] He also quotes Gregory of Nazianzus, "'He who is infinite is embraced by the soul which is the medium between God and the flesh.'"[774] So although he does not explicitly say whether the soul is the point of union within Christ, he quotes two other theologians at the end of his work that imply it. He clearly does not put the same emphasis on this aspect of the union as Evagrius. Cassian also explains that, "in virtue of the ineffable unity of the mystery, by which man was joined to God, there is no separation between Christ and the Word."[775] Such is the majesty of God that the inability to explain the nature of the union between divine and human in Christ

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for him. Although when paired with other contemporary Christological theologians, his approach is lacking. Many questions could be put to the *De Incarnatione* that are not explicitly explained by Cassian. However, his reliance on Scripture is a key feature of him as a writer, and stands in evidence of the coherentapproach to all three works. Even in the *Conferences,* Cassian often leaves questions open as the monk on the ascetic journey is meant to be led only so far by him as a monastic leader. This same approach seems to be used in the *De Inc*, but not to the same effect – here it is rather a disadvantage.

[772] Marie-Anne Vannier, "Le *De Incarnatione Domini* de Jean Cassien", p.62; for Cyril's other strengths in the Christological debate, cf. Intro.2.4.b

[773] *De Inc.* 7.27

[774] *De Inc.* 7.28

[775] *De Inc*. 4.5

does not take away from the reality of fullness of the union and actually increases the reality of His divinity.

This is an essential piece of Cassianic contemplation—separate from Evagrius—Christ is wholly part of the divine and therefore the goal of the entirety of contemplation, not just one stage of it. In Conference Ten, Cassian states that, in prayer, the soul's "state of purity lets it progress and causes Jesus to be seen by the soul's inward gaze—either as still humble and in the flesh or as glorified and coming in the glory of his majesty."[776] Columba Stewart points out that "Cassian's explicit and accessible Christology and his use of vivid, experiential language in his descriptions of true prayer preclude the possibility latent in Evagrius' writings of misunderstanding true prayer to be some sort of intellectualized blankness."[777] Through Stewart's description and Cassian's progression of prayer given above, it is clear that while he is influenced by Evagrius, he is able to bring his own developments to Evagrian ideas. Christ is the object of contemplation and prayer no matter what stage one is in, and it is the contemplation of both the human and divine that is important in his understanding.

Cassian considers Christ to be consubstantial with the Father because Christ is Logos incarnate. This becomes clear in his exposition against the Nestorian idea that Mary, the mother of Christ, should not be called *theotokos* (mother of God). According to Cassian, "the Word was sent to heal men, for though healing was given through Christ, yet the Word of God was in Christ, and healed all things through Christ: and so since Christ and the Word were united in the mystery of the Incarnation, Christ and the Word of God became one Son of God in either substance."[778] Therefore, there is no need to separate the terms used for the humanity or the divinity of the Person of Christ, because the two are so united within the mystery of the Incarnation that to speak of one is to speak of the other.

[776] *Conf.* 10.6.1
[777] Columba Stewart, *Cassian the Monk,* p.96.
[778] *De Inc* 4.4

Stewart and Codina are both correctly show that when Cassian explains contemplation as a journey toward union with God, he actually uses "God" and "Christ" interchangeably, representing his consideratoin of Christ to be fully consubstantial with the Father.[779] Cassian's emphasis on the complete union of divinity and humanity within Christ might give the impression that the humanity takes a back seat to the driving force of the divinity; however, Cassian is clear concerning the importance of Christ's humanity in the Incarnation and in man's understanding of Him and salvation.

b. Christ's Humanity/Body

The humanity of Christ in Cassian is portrayed as a full humanity made up of body and soul.[780] When explaining the four different meanings of flesh (*carnis*) within Scripture, he uses the example of Christ to illustrate on such meaning: "Sometimes it signifies the human being in his entirety, namely as composed of body and soul, as in this case: 'The Word was made flesh.' [John 1:14]"[781] Cassian also says in the *De Incarnatione*: "in the flesh of Christ there is present God and soul."[782] However, Cassian's understanding of Christ's humanity goes beyond the fact that the Logos is joined to both body and soul. In fact, it is through Christ's humanity that we can better understand Cassian's picture of humanity in its creation, fallenness, and eventual salvation.

This aspect of Christology in the Evagrius section above is titled "Christ's Body" and here in the Cassian section it is "Christ's Humanity/Body". This is because for Cassian, what

[779] cf. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.48; Codina, *El cristologico aspecto*, pp.85-90; also cf. *Inst*. 11.18; *Conf.* 1.11.2, 1.12, 1.13.1, 2.2.2, 3.1.2, 7.6.1, 10.7.2, 14.4.1, 19.8.4, 23.5.2, 23.11.1, 23.16.2 (list of references put together by Stewart in citation above)
[780] Cassian often uses *homo assumptus* for "humanity", which has received criticism; cf. Grillmeier, *Christ in the Christian Tradition, Vol. 1*, p.468, and Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.23. However, Casiday and Fairbairn consider this to be undue criticism as the controversy over the terminology refers specifically to Theodore of Mopsuestia's use of it which is condemned in 553. For Cassian and his contemporaries, however, it was still widely used without negative connotation; cf. Casiday, *Saint John Cassian on Prayer*, pp.56-7 n.34, and Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church*, pp.190-92
[781] *Conf.* 4.10.1
[782] *De Inc.* 5.12

it means to be human is so rooted in the body that both terms need to be in the title. Through Evagrius' understanding of Creation and the Movement, humanity only comes into existence after the Movement and with the creation of the material world and the body; however, for Cassian, the body is a part of the Fall, not a result of it and therefore humanity is defined in the initial moment of Creation. As a result, for Evagrius, humanity by definition is fallen, while for Cassian, humanity is only fallen in its current state. Following from this, in Cassian's Creation gluttony has an important role in the Fall and its current state of corruption. When the Devil tempted Jesus, he used the same three vices which he tempted Adam and Eve leading to their corruption: gluttony, vainglory/avarice, and pride.[783] The possibility of avarice being the second vice is in similarity with the list of three vices Evagrius gives in *On Thoughts* 1: gluttony, avarice, and vainglory; however, Cassian is stalwart in the first vice being gluttony and the last being pride. While the middle vice possibly being avarice may be a nod to his predecessor, it is gluttony and pride that are the essential vices for the temptation of Jesus.[784]

This emphasis on gluttony is important for clarity in Cassian's understanding of Christ coming in the "likeness of sinful flesh". The temptation of gluttony was present in the original body-soul creation of humanity; whereas, the temptation of fornication only came into humanity *after* the Fall.[785] Cassian uses Romans 8:3 in order to explain the state of the humanity within Christ, as do Origen and Augustine. [786] It is the "likeness of sinful flesh" precisely because he is born of a Virgin without the contagion of lust causing the conception. However, for Cassian, this is does not then necessitate lust being the defining characteristic of fallen humanity, rather it is the consequence of a fallen humanity. In order for Christ to

[783] The order Gluttony, Vainglory, and Pride is present in *Conf.* 5.6 and 22.10 and the second order Gluttony, Avarice, and Pride is present in *Conf.* 5.6 and 24.17.
[784] For more on this, cf. Chapter II. on gluttony, Chapter III. o Kathryn Hager, "The Devil in the Details", *Studia Patristica* 64
[785] Cf. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk,* p.65
[786] Cf. Dominic Keech, "John Cassian and Christology of Romans 8:3" *Vigiliae Christianae* 64, No. 3, Leiden: Brill, 2010

redeem humanity, he must have within him a full humanity. It is not necessary for lust and the contagion of lust as sinful flesh to be a part of that full humanity because it is a result of the Fall, along with all the rest of the vices that assault fallen humanity. While it is the only vice passed through the flesh, it is one of many, a "secondary vice", to quote Keech.[787] Cassian even states in *Conf*. 5.3, the section just before he turns to Rom 8:3, that:

> "For one who had conquered gluttony could not be tempted by fornication, which proceeds from the former's repletion and from its root. Even the first Adam would not have been struck by this if he had not been deceived by the enticements of the devil and contracted the passion which generates it."

The primary vices of gluttony, vainglory/avarice, and pride are the vices that took down the humanity of Adam – that which was *not* fallen. These are the important vices for redemption; however, the presence of gluttony is necessary for human salvation – this vice and the body are one of the crucial aspects that separate humans from the eternal condemnation the demons received. This consistency with Cassian's understanding of the Fall is in opposition to Keech's conclusion that Cassian's interpretation of Romans 8:3 is inconsistent with his theology of the Fall and therefore has negative implications on his success as a "synthetic theologian."[788] Whatever one might think of Cassian as a synthetic theologian or not, this aspect does not add to the argument that he is not a one.

While Christ had the "likeness of sinful flesh", he had the reality of flesh itself. It is through a real and true humanity that Christ is able to bring redemption. He gained a human body through the Incarnation, and in the Resurrection, he perfected that body. Fairbairn notes that in *De Inc.* 3.3, Cassian uses some dangerous language that could seem to imply an absorbtionist theory; however, he also states that the important terms that are transformed by the divinity are *infirmitate carnis*, *infirmitas imbecillitatis humanae*, and *infirmitate corporea* showing that the divinity has affected the *infirmitas* of humanity not humanity itself.[789] Also,

[787] Dominic Keech, Ibid, p.289.
[788] Ibid, p.298.
[789] Donald Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology in the Early Church*, p.195-6.

linking this to Cassian's description of the four meanings of *carnis* in Scripture, the second meaning he lists is "sinful and carnal human beings" which would support that it is not humanity, but the weaknesses of humanity that are transformed by the divinity.[790] He also goes on to say: "And therefore we no longer know Christ according to the flesh (*carnem*), because when bodily infirmity (*infirmitate corporea*) has been absorbed by Divine Majesty, nothing remains in that Sacred Body (*sacro corpori*), from which weakness of the flesh (*inbecillitas carnis*) can be known in it."[791] Therefore, Christ has not only taken on the reality of flesh without the inherent sinfulness produced by sexual conception, felt the pangs of hunger, thirst, sleep and pain, and conquered the same three vices that took down the first Adam, but he also through his voluntary death has transformed that reality of the flesh into a Sacred Body. Through fully taking on humanity, he is able to give the possibility of salvation within the flesh. That is not to say that salvation occurs within the earthly life, but rather that because body and soul were part of the corruption, body and soul must be redeemed.[792]

Through the human experiences of Christ and the Resurrection, his humanity becomes the symbol of virtue. Through the development of virtue humans participate in divinity through Christ because Christ *is* virtue, where men only possess virtue.[793] A further participation in this virtue and divinity is available through the Eucharist.[794] The power of which can be seen through Cassian's explanation that those possessed in the body by evil spirits should not be prohibited from the Eucharist, but rather should be given it every day if possible, because "when it is received by a person it burns out as it were by a kind of fire the spirit that occupies his members and that is trying to hide in them, and it flees."[795] Possession can only occur within the body because the soul is accessed by the Trinity alone, therefore

[790] *Conf.* 4.10.1
[791] *De Inc.* 3.3
[792] In *Conf.* 4.10.1, Cassian gives another example for the first meaning of *carnis* in Scripture: "All flesh shall see salvation of our God." (Lk 3:6).
[793] Victor Codina, *El cristologico aspecto,* p.53.
[794] cf. *Conf.* 7.29-30; 22.3-7,9; 23.21, and *De Inc.* 6.6
[795] *Conf.* 7.30.2

the Eucharist is able to give a further strength and help to the body in fighting off a possessing spirit.

Therefore, the humanity of Christ a full and complete humanity necessary to reverse the punishment and corruption caused by the first Adam in the Fall. His body is an extremely important part of his humanity and the struggle of men for salvation. This aspect of his Christology is intertwined with his understanding of the Fall, just as Evagrius' understanding of the humanity within Christ is dictated by his understanding of the Movement and the second creation.

c. Deification

Augustine Casiday, in his article, "Deification in Origen, Evagrius and Cassian", gives a "deliberately vague" definition of deification which is "that transformation of human persons which results in the legitimate ascription to them of divine attributes."[796] By this description, Cassian certainly has a doctrine of deification. It is through Cassian's clarification to Nestorius concerning the word, *theodochus,* this doctrine becomes clear. Cassian distinguishes Christ from the saints with the word, *theodochus*, because the saints "receive" God, but only Christ is God by nature. In *De Incarnatione* 5.4, Cassian states: "All, then, whether patriarchs, or prophets, or apostles, or martyrs, or saints, has every one of them God within him, and were all makde sons of God and were all receivers of God (θεοδόχοι)". Casiday further defines deification as participation in the divine glory of Christ in another work, which is clearly seen in the section above where through the virtues and the Eucharist, men are able to participate in Christ.[797] Cassian also affirms in Conference One that it is possible to experience the Kingdom of Heaven, the *telos* of asceticism, while in this life: "Thus, if the kingdom of God is within us, and the kingdom of God is itself righteousness and

[796] A.M.C. Casiday, "Deification in Origen, Evagrius and Cassian", p. 995.
[797] Augustine Casiday, *Tradition and Theology*, p.58.

peace and joy, then whoever abides in these things is undoubtedly in the kingdom of God."[798] Through the virtues, which are Christ and are cultivated in the ascetic life and contemplation, it is possible to participate in the divine glory of the kingdom of God.

d. Cassian's Christ

Christ pervades all aspects of Cassian's works. The person of Christ is fully human and fully divine and it is only through the Incarnation and Resurrection that humanity is able to have the possibility for salvation. Christ is also consubstantial with the Father and fully the Son of God. Donald Fairbairn elucidates the importance of this idea within Cassian's works when he states:

> "Cassian is driven to paradox; he must say that God was born and died. But the paradox constitutes the heart of Cassian's faith because it ensures that it was God who brought about redemption; it is God who gives himself to us in salvation: only the true Son of God can give us divine communion the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. If Christ is not this true Son of God by nature, if is not the Logos, then he cannot save us."[799]

It has already been made clear how this does not take away from the reality of humanity within Christ. Even Cassian's emphasis on humility, in which one gives oneself wholly to God's will, being the ultimate virtue to and, in opposition, pride, in which one turns away from God exalting one's own will above God's, being the worst possible vice, is in support of this idea. It is through the humility of the all-powerful, immeasurable majesty of God in Christ that saves humanity.

For Cassian, Christ pervades Scripture, both the Old and New Testament can be read in Christ.[800] "The spiritual life (of which spiritual knowledge is a component) takes place *in Christ*" for Cassian.[801] This radically shifts his contemplative life from the Evagrian stages of

[798] *Conf.* 1.13.3
[799] Donald Fairbairn, *Grace and Christology*, p.187.
[800] Cf. Columba Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.91; Victor Codina, *El cristologico aspecto*, pp.113-15
[801] Augustine Casiday, *Tradition and Theology*, p.246.

contemplation in which the monk moves *past* Christ.[802] The Evagrian Christ is rooted in his anthropology – humanity is a material definition of a state of knowledge centred in the *nous*. One must move beyond the material knowledge in order to regain the Unity with the Trinity through immaterial knowledge. Cassian's anthropology affects his understanding of Christ differently. There is no separation between Christ and the Trinity, which has important implications for the relationship between humanity and the divine. Evagrius clearly draws an uncrossable line between created and Creator. Cassian does not have the need to emphasize this separation, allowing him to focus on the relationship between created and Creator as an emotional, virtue-centred bond found within the heart, rather than a union through a specific knowledge in the intellectual centre, the *nous*. This shift affects Cassian's understanding of the kingdom of God, purity of heart, love and contemplation, and prayer – all of which will be brought out in detail below.

IV.3: The telos *of the ascetic life: Kingdom of God*

Conference One is the starting point for monks progressing into the contemplative portion of the ascetic life after the *Institutes*, and it is here that Cassian explains the *telos* and *scopos* of the ascetic life. The *telos*, the end, of the ascetic life is reachable on a permanent basis through salvation, but not in this life – that is the realm of the *scopos*, or goal. The monk prepares himself internally for the end through the practical and contemplative life for one of two kingdoms: "But within us there can be nothing else than knowledge or ignorance of the truth, and the love of either the vices or the virtues, by which we make ready a kingdom in our hearts either for the devil or for Christ."[803] The dichotomy of these two kingdoms is not

[802]Cf. Evagrius, *Ep fid* 21: "This is the blessedness that Our Lord asserted that neither his angels, nor he himself, knew. For in saying 'day', he meant the complete and precise comprehension of God's purposes, and in saying 'hour', the contemplation of the One and Only – the understanding of which things he attribute to the Father only."
[803] Cassian, *Conf.* 1.13.2

unique to Cassian.[804] However, his understanding of them, while similar to Augustine's two cities in the relationship between virtue and knowledge with the kingdom of God as well as vice and ignorance with the kingdom of the Devil, is not steeped in the predestinatory implications of Augustinian thought. Rather, he internalizes the kingdoms within the heart of the monk and relates them to purity of heart. Through the eradication of the vices and the development of the virtues, the monk lays a foundation within himself for the kingdom of God. If he stumbles, he begins to lay the foundation for the Devil, but if he is able to correct himself and continue to be guided by the grace of God in developing purity of heart, he will continue toward the kingdom of God. This is the *telos* (end) of the ascetic life, but purity of heart is its *scopos* (goal) which is reachable in this life. It is through the *scopos* that one prepares for the *telos*.

The kingdom of Heaven (he uses Heaven, God, and Christ interchangeably here) can be understood in a "threefold manner". First, it can understood as the "heavens that are to reign", meaning the holy saints that are to reign over others as can be seen in the biblical passages: "You be over five cities, and you be over ten" and "You shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."[805] Evagrius also uses the former passage in respect to the transformation in knowledge and virtue, however, he relates this to when men will become angels and then guide other reasoning souls.[806] The second understanding for Cassian is when the heavens will be reigned over by Christ when God has finally become "all in all". The third and final understanding is "as the holy ones who are to reign in heaven with the Lord."[807] This multiplicity in understanding allows Cassian to point to the variety of

[804] Cf. Ambrose, *On Penance* 2.4.22, *On Abraham* 2.8.58; Augustine, *Contra Faustum* 12.32, *Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum* 1.63, 1.112, 1.123, 2.40, 2.208, 3.96, 4.107, 4.113, 6.5, *In Psalmos* 47.3, 59.2, *Quaestiones* 1.5, *Sermones* 21.4, 202, 362; Jerome, *Commentary on Abakuk* 2.3, *In Jeremiah* 1; Origen, *Homily on Numbers* 13.1; Paulinus of Nola, *Carmen* 21.239; Prosper of Aquitaine, *Epistula to Rufinus concerning grace and free will* 9.10
[805] Cf. Lk 19:19, 17 & Mt 19:28, respectively.
[806] Cf. Evagrius, *KG* 6.24; also, cf. Marsili, *Giovanni Cassiano*, p.94
[807] Cassian, *Conf.* 1.13.6

contemporary interpretations of the kingdom of Heaven. It could be understood as Christ himself (Cyprian), the Holy Spirit (Gregory of Nyssa), the faithful Christians (Augustine), contemplation (Evagrius), a life of virtue (Origen), or the end of the present age (Tertullian), to name a few.[808] The important thing that Cassian stresses, however, is that even if there is an undefined nature to the picture of what the kingdom of heaven will be, there is definition in how to reach it. For him it is simple: "Just as the kingdom of the Devil is gained by conniving at the vices, so the kingdom of God is possessed in purity of heart and spiritual knowledge by practicing the virtues."[809] It is only possible to know how to lay the foundations for the kingdom of heaven—through the ascetic life. For Cassian, the ascetic life is the journey toward the eternal life present in the kingdom of God – a journey that leads one away from "death and hell" which are present in the kingdom of the Devil.[810]

Evagrius also connects virtue, knowledge, and *apatheia* to the kingdom of Heaven; however, he also makes a distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Heaven, or Christ.[811] The kingdom of Heaven/Christ is subordinate to the kingdom of God.[812] In *Praktikos* 2-3, Evagrius defines both the kingdom of heaven and God: "(2) The kingdom of heaven is *apatheia* of the soul accompanied by true knowledge of beings. (3) The kingdom of God is knowledge of the Holy Trinity co-extensive with the substance of the mind and surpassing it incorruptibility." The kingdom of Heaven is the knowledge of beings – those

[808] Cf. Boniface Ramsey, *The Conferences*, p.71; also cf. Cyprian, *De orat. dom.* 13; Gregory of Nyssa, *De orat. dom.* 3; Augustine, *Serm.* 57.5.5; Evagrius, *Ep. fid.* 37; Origen, *De orat.* 25.1; and Tertullian, *De orat.* 5
[809] Cassian, *Conf.* 1.14.1
[810] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 1.14.2
[811] In *Foundations* 4, however, there is an exception where Evagrius equates the kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of God: "When tomorrow has arrived, that time will provide what is needed, as long as you are seeking above all for the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness of God. For the Lord says, 'Seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well' (Mt 6:33)." Sinkewicz suggests that this is "veiled allusion to the practical and the Gnostic life" which Evagrius interprets from this scriptural passage in *On Prayer* 39. (Sinkewicz, *Evagrius of Pontus*, p.3) However, Evagrius here is using kingdom of heaven interchangeably with kingdom of God, but this could perhaps be because his primary concern in this text is "how to lead the monastic life [and] does not treat...the higher mysteries of theology." (Casiday, *Evagrius Ponticus*, p.81)
[812] For Evagrius' references to the kingdom of Heaven, cf. *Foundations* 4; *Gnostikos* 17; *KG* 1.44, 4.30, 4.40, 5.30, 6.22; *On Psalms* 10:30 (21); *On Eccl.* 8, 15, 19; *Ep. fid*. 23-24, 37; *Letter* 1.5, 20.2. For his references to the kingdom of God, cf. *Foundations* 4; *To the Virgin* 55; *KG* 4.23; *On Proverbs* 2 (kingdom of Israel); *On the Lord's Prayer*; *Ep. fid.* 23-24

created through the second material creation in Christ. Then the next level of knowledge is the transcendence of the material world to the knowledge of the Trinity in the first natural contemplation.[813] This division is entrenched in Evagrius' understanding of one immaterial creation, and a second material creation. It is also thoroughly connected to his understanding of Christology.

While Evagrius does connect the kingdom of Heaven to *apatheia*, and Cassian states that the "kingdom of God is possessed in purity of heart and spiritual knowledge", it is important that Cassian does not have this distinction between divine kingdoms because it does not fit with his theology. However, Cassian's *scopos* of purity of heart leading to the *telos* the kingdom of God/Heaven/Christ, could have found its inspiration in the Evagrian scheme; although it is most likely also affected by the influences that cause his changed theology, like the connection to Augustine stated above in the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the Devil. However, it is important to note that in the *Gnostikos*, Evagrius does make a veiled reference to this idea: "It is necessary also to know the definitions of things, especially those of the virtues and vices; this, indeed, is the source [and the beginning] of knowledge and ignorance, of the kingdom of heaven and of torment."[814] The kingdom of "torment" is pointing more to the demons as the beings filled with vice on Evagrius' cosmological spectrum, and it is possible that Cassian could have found a small amount of inspiration here as well.

The most important difference between Cassian's kingdom of God/Heaven/Christ and kingdom of the Devil, and Evagrius' kingdom of Heaven and kingdom of God, is their placement within the protological-cosmological-eschatological spectrum of movement. For Evagrius, the human being may move toward the demons in ignorance and vice, or he may

[813] Cf. Evagrius, *Ep. fid.* 23: "For they say that Christ's kingdom is the whole of material knowledge: but the kingdom of our God and Father is contemplation that is immaterial and, if one may say so, contemplation of unconcealed divinity itself."
[814] Evagrius, *Gnostikos* 17

move toward God. He moves toward God through moving toward the angels in knowledge and virtue. In this movement toward God, there are clear levels. First is the second natural contemplation, which is the kingdom of Heaven. Here the human develops *apatheia* through the contemplation of the created world. He then may move to the next level, the first natural contemplation, which is the kingdom of God. Here he finds *theologia*, which is the knowledge of the immaterial and uncreated.

For Cassian, on the other hand, this protological-cosmological-eschatological framing of the ascetic life is internalized. His focus is on the human being created as body-soul, corrupted as body-soul, and transformed as body-soul in salvation. The Devil provides a place of juxtaposition with the human being in order to understand the range of possibilities found in the definition of the human as body-soul. The demons and the Devil are connected to ignorance and vice, and are the epitome of the opposite of the end to which the monk strives. Therefore, when the monk allows for vice within his heart, he lays the foundation for the Devil and his kingdom of death and hell; however, when he cultivates virtue, he lays the foundation for his heart to be filled with the Holy Spirit bringing him closer to the eternal life of the kingdom of Heaven. Cassian does not split the knowledge and virtue end of the ascetical frame into different levels; rather, it is a constant progression, digression, and development of one's relationship to the Holy Spirit, Christ, and God.

IV.4: The **scopos** *of the ascetic life: Purity of Heart*

The concepts of purity of heart and *apatheia* are so complex that they have been the topic of many crucial and detailed scholarly works. Unpacking these dense concepts is difficult and allows for differing interpretations. Considering Evagrian studies alone, there are different interpretations on whether *apatheia* is actually something Evagrius considered reachable in

this life; whether it actually referred to a state of sinlessness or rather a state of stability; and the significance of imperfect vs perfect *apatheia*, to name a few. Then, to consider Cassian's relationship to the concept in terms of his relationship to Evagrius, one must take into account not only Jerome's *Letter* 133, in which he decisively cast a shadow of heresy upon Evagrius' use of *apatheia* suggesting that it allows a monk either to be like a rock or like God, but also the history of the concept in the philosophical and theological traditions of both the Latin and Greek worlds.[815] To say that getting to heart of the concept and the relationship between Cassian's "purity of heart" and Evagrius' *apatheia* is a difficult and delicate process is an understatement.

Augustine Casiday and Mark Sheridan both stress the need to understand the history of *apatheia* before making any judgments on the absence of the Greek term in Cassian's works. While it is true that he never shies from using Greek terminology and often states that the Greek can actually render an idea better than the Latin, his lack of use of *apatheia* is not necessarily a reaction to Jerome's letter alone. The term had a long history in both Latin and Greek from the Classical period.[816] However, the controversy over the term lies more in the Latin tradition than in the Greek as it was difficult to provide a single word to translate it meaning it needed multiple Latin expressions for the single Greek concept.[817] Even Cicero used "a variety of expressions" (*tranquillitas, quietus, constantia,* and *perturbationibus vacuus animus*) in order to express the Greek *apatheia*, though he did not use the Greek

[815] Not only does Jerome condemn Evagrius through this, but it is a further condemnation of Origenism. He considers Origen to be the source of this heresy, and does not mention Clement at all. Janus Pannonius suggests that "possible he was not well informed on Clement and for this reason assigned to Origen the initiative in respect of introducing the ideal of impassibility into Christian thought." Janus Pannonius, "Origen, Evagrius Ponticus and the ideal of impassibility", *Origeniana Septima*, p.372.
[816] The term began through the Stoics, who considered the complete eradication of emotions the goal of the philosopher. Simo Knuuttila suggests that Plato expresses a similar theory yet does not consider it to be possible for the psychosomatic human being. cf. Simo Knuuttlia, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2004, p.24. The history of the term is complex and varied. cf. Casiday, "*Apatheia* and sexuality in Augustine and Cassian" and Mark Sheridan, "The controversy over *apatheia:* Cassian's sources and his use of them" for excellent overviews of the history of this term.
[817] cf. Sheridan, "The controversy over *apatheia*", p.289

term.[818] Seneca explicitly "notes that one risks a misunderstanding if one tries to translate the word with a single Latin word."[819] Further on in the Latin Christian tradition, Ambrose treats it similarly to Cassian in that he often and adeptly uses Greek terminology, but does not use the word *apatheia*, though he does express the concept.[820] Therefore, it is possible that Cassian is actually merely following the tradition of the language he was writing in, accordingly deciding to leave the controversial *apatheia* out.

Jeremy Driscoll has also suggested another possibility, which is that Evagrius himself uses the concept of "purity of heart" as well as and in apposition to *apatheia*.[821] He notes that while *apatheia* is Evagrius' choice term in the *Praktikos*, which dedicates a large portion to the concept, in his other works, he uses "purity of heart" as an equivalent. However, he does also note that purity of heart has a broader application for Evagrius than *apatheia.* Where *apatheia* primarily denotes the purification of the passions from the irascible and concuspiscible portions of the soul, the purification of the heart is able to denote the inner life – including the rational part.[822] Therefore, it is entirely plausible that Cassian's lack of use of *apatheia* is a result of a combination of factors: the long history of *apatheia* as a complicated term to express in Latin, Evagrius' own use of "purity of heart", as well as Jerome's condemnation of the term in relation to the Evagrian teachings in 414.

By considering the other factors that may have influenced Cassian's decision to omit the Greek word, *apatheia*, it becomes clear that Cassian is as discerning in his choices concerning the tradition in which he was educated, as he was in those concerning the tradition to which he was contributing. It has been clearly shown through the thorough work of Mark Sheridan and Columba Stewart that Cassian uses certain terms associated with *apatheia* such

[818] ibid, p.293; cf. Cicero, *Tusculan Diputations* III.7-10; for more on Cicero and *apatheia*, cf. Colish, "The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middles Ages, I. Stoicism in Classical Literature", *Studies in the History of Christian Thought* 34, Leiden: Brill, 1985, pp.142-143
[819] ibid, p.294; cf. Seneca, *Epistula* 9.2, 9.5
[820] ibid, p.295; cf. Colish, "The Stoic Tradition II", pp.54-57
[821] Cf. Jeremy Driscoll, "*Apatheia* and purity of heart in Evagrius Ponticus"
[822] Driscoll, "*Apatheia* and purity of heart", p.157

as the nouns, *tranquillitas* and *constantia,* and the adjective, *inmobilis*.[823] The significance of this is that although he does not use the word *apatheia,* he is clearly educated in the tradition and is deliberately choosing not to use the Greek word. Salvatore Marsili considers Cassian's purity of heart to be the Evagrian concept of *apatheia*, with a more friendly, biblical terminology and elaborate "loops of words" (*giri di parole*)[824]; however, it is not, in fact, the same understanding as Evagrius' *apatheia*, and his "variety of terms [work] precisely to combat the misunderstandings of which was undoubtedly aware".[825]

Casiday connects Cassian's purity of heart and *imperturbabilitas* to perfect chastity – a state that Cassian considered could be attainable in this life, but only in exceptional circumstances.[826] The significance of this connection is not only in his ability to be a discerning student of both Augustinian and Evagrian ideals, as Casiday notes, but also can be taken further than to emphasize purity of heart's foundations in the struggle between the flesh and the spirit – a struggle which is at the heart of Cassian's ascetical theology.

For Cassian, the ascetic struggle lies first within the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, and second in the battle against the demons. The second battle functions alongside the first, but it is in the victories in the first that one is able to find victory in the second. This is where the development of purity of heart lies – in the struggle between the flesh and the spirit. In between the flesh and the spirit lies the will, as the monk is able to subject his own will to the divine will, he develops his purity of heart.[827] The heart is the place of connection with the divine: "It is there that the Lord sits as arbiter and overseer and constantly observes the progress and struggle of our contest."[828] The heart encompasses the inner man – including

[823] Cf. Mark Sheridan, "The controversy over *apatheia*", pp.306-309; Columba Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, pp.42-47
[824] Marsili, *Giovanni Cassiano*, p.115
[825] Sheridan, "The controversy over *apatheia*", p.309
[826] Cf. Augustine Casiday, "*Apatheia* and sexuality in the thought of Augustine and Cassian", pp.383-394
[827] Cf. Michel Olphe-Galliard, "Le pureté de Coeur d'aprés Cassien", *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique* 17, 1936, p.29
[828] Cassian, *Inst*.6.9; also cf. *Inst.* 6.17; *Conf.* 1.13, 14.9.3

the mind. For Evagrius, the "place of God" is the *nous*, because it is the part of the rational beings from the first creation.[829] This changes the implications of purity of heart. For Evagrius, *apatheia* is the purification of the vices from the concupiscible and irascible parts of the soul, specifically. Even though Driscoll notes that heart allows Evagrius to speak about all three parts of the soul, where *apatheia* refers to two, this concept is not the focus in his ascetic program.[830] His focus is rather on *apatheia*, and the purification of the concupiscible and irascible in order to allow for the *nous*, the rational part, to reinstate God within it.

Cassian's Conference Four, on the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, repeatedly talks about chastity alongside purity, purification, and purity of heart.[831] However, it is in Conference Twelve, on chastity, that Cassian's understanding of the reciprocal relationship between purity of body and heart is brought out more fully. He explains that one will not be able to progress in knowledge if he has not fixed all his efforts "and all his concern on the cultivation of his heart and on the purity of chastity. Thus the mind, polished by these practices and refined by its progress, will arrive at perfect holiness of body and soul."[832] Cassian's ascetic program works to bring man as body-soul to salvation; therefore he must purify the body through fasting, abstinence, and chastity, alongside the purification of the heart through the cultivation of virtue. Just as chastity cannot be attained without God's grace, neither can purity of heart.

Chastity is the purification of the outer man dependant on the purification of the inner man. Abba Serenus was able to reach such a state of "external chastity" through the bestowing of "internal chastity of heart of soul" by the grace of God.[833] However, while Serenus is an exceptional case, it is Cassian's insistence on the achievements of the inner man in purifying the outer man that is significant. If he considered the body to be something to be

[829] Cf. Evagrius, *Skemmata* 20, 23, 25; *On Prayer* 57
[830] Cf. Driscoll, "*Apatheia* and purity of heart", p.157
[831] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 4.4, 4.12.1, 4.12.4, 4.15.1-2, 4.16
[832] Cassian, *Conf.* 12.5.5
[833] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 7.2.1-3

completely left behind in the spiritual struggle, then Serenus' case would not be so exceptional – but rather, he is able to purify the outer man through the state of the inner. The ascetic must work on the purification of *both* the inner and outer man. As seen in chapter two, gluttony can only be controlled and will never cease to be a temptation because it is tied up in the needs of the body and became present even for the body in its original creation; fornication also remains with the body, yet can be eradicated with extreme diligence and purity of heart, because it is a *result* of the Fall and therefore must be destroyed.

However, chastity refers to more than just the eradication of the temptation of fornication – though this is its sign. Cassian "does not limit 'purity of heart' to sexual chastity. His concept is much broader, meaning freedom from all those tendencies, forces, drives and thoughts that drag the soul down to earth and keep it from soaring to God."[834] At the beginning of Conference Twelve, on chastity, Cassian explains that chastity is the destruction of the body of sin, which is "constructed out of the many members of the vices, and to it belongs whatever sin is commited by deed or word or thought."[835] He then goes on to quote Col 3:5 which specifically mentions fornication, impurity, wantonness, evil desire and avarice. The first three represent carnal union, lustful thoughts, and whatever is pleasing, respectively.[836] However, the fourth, evil desire, refers to "the sickness of a corrupt will", showing that "the chastity of bodily abstinence alone is insufficient for perfect purity unless integrity of mind is also present".[837] The fifth, avarice, represents the preference of "the love of worldly things to divine love."[838] Therefore, chastity is representative of the renunciation of the fleshly desires as well as the desires which connect one to the world. The eradication of fornication in Serenus is representative of his renunciation of the fallen, corrupt aspect of

[834] Terrence Kardong, "John Cassian's evaluation of monastic practices", *The American Benedictine Review* 43:1, 1992, p.92
[835] Cassian, *Conf.* 12.2.1
[836] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 12.2.2-3
[837] Cassian, *Conf.* 12.2.4-5
[838] Cassian, *Conf.* 12.2.6

humanity in the battle between the flesh and the spirit. Purity of heart is the cultivation of the spirit that must happen in concert with the purification of the body of sin, or the flesh, through chastity.

Purity of heart is reached through the combination of ascetic effort – both inner and outer – and the grace of God. In fact, God will remove his grace for short periods of time in order that "humbly seeing the frailty of our spirit, we may not become proud because of any previous purity of heart which has been granted to us by his visitation".[839] This focus on its achievement through the grace of God is a vital part of understanding Cassian's purity of heart. As seen above, purity of heart is the *scopos* of the ascetic life – it is purification through the eradication of the vices through physical practices as well as spiritual development through the spiritual battle.[840] However, eradication of the vices alone is not enough; the monk must also be striving toward cultivating the virtues.[841] One of issues Jerome eviscerates Evagrian *apatheia* on is the implication of sinlessness through the complete eradication of the passions. However, Cassian is clear to point out that a state of sinlessness is not possible in this life;[842] yet this would seem to be in opposition to the attainable goal of purity of heart in Cassian's teachings. Purity of heart, for Cassian, is not a static state, but rather a gradual and constant process of ebbs and flows dependant on the grace of God.

Purity of heart is directly related to the reclamation of the original relationship between created and Creator through the ascetic life. Though the fullness of this relationship cannot be grasped within this life, it is journey which one must begin and progress in so that

[839] Cassian, *Conf.* 4.4.1
[840] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 4.43, 5.7, 5.21.1, 5.22; *Conf.* 5.27, 12.5-6, 12.8, 14.4, 15.10, 20.7, 20.12, 21.16
[841] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 20.12.3-4: "Hence it will be of no great help to the person who desires to arrive at the height of perfection to have attained to the end of repentance—that is, abstaining from what is unlawful—if he does not also constantly and tirelessly reach out to those virtues by which one attains to the marks of reparation. For it is not enough for someone to have abstained from the stinking filth of sins that disgust the Lord if he does not also possess, through purity of heart and the perfection of apostolic love, that good fragrance of virtuousness wherein the Lord takes delight."
[842] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 23 "On Sinlessness"

it may be attained eventually. It is bound up in the entire purpose of the ascetic life – though certain goals and ends are not attainable in this life, they are not attainable in the next without the battle, journey, process, and struggle towards them. This reclaiming of the original relationship, for Cassian, includes both body and soul – as seen in the reciprocity between chastity and purity of heart. There are two ways in which Cassian speaks of purity of heart – from the personal perspective of the one cultivating it within himself, and from the view of others looking at him. This is an important distinction as it reveals important details on whether Cassian considers true purity of heart to be attainable in this life.

The question of attainability within this life is also put to Evagrius' *apatheia*. Mette Sophia Bøcher Rasmussen works to clarify an answer in her article on his *apatheia.* She stresses the distinction between imperfect and perfect *apatheia* – imperfect being attainable in this life, and perfect being attainable only in the next life.[843] While Cassian does not develop the idea of imperfect or perfect purity of heart, it is clear that he considers it to be a process of purification.[844] Attaining purity of heart requires the complete renunciation of the self as connected to the corrupt state of humanity. Perpetual purity of heart comes when "everyone will pass over from this multiform or practical activity to the contemplation of divine things"; however, it is possible to work towards this within this life if one has reached such a level of renunciation. Those who are advanced in the ascetic life even while "they are still dwelling in the corruptible flesh they set themselves" the task of working toward the state "in which they will abide once corruption has been laid aside".[845] Cassian makes it clear that the perpetual *state* of purity of heart is not attainable within this life, yet for those who are advanced enough, the *process* may begin within this life.

[843] Mette Sophia Bøcher Rasmussen, "Like a rock or like God? The concept of *apatheia* in the monastic theology of Evagrius of Pontus", *Studia Theologica – Nordic Journal of Theology* 59, No. 2, pp.158-160.
[844] Cassian does mention perfect purity of heart (*perfectam cordis...puritatem*) in *Inst.* 12.24, this is the only place in which he uses this terminology and he does not develop it further.
[845] Cassian, *Conf.* 1.10.5

As the ascetic progresses in his own personal journey, he begins to subject his own will to the will of the divine; the vision of God becomes clearer as the eyes of the soul are purified; the more he progresses, the more his vision should be locked on God.[846] One of the major pitfalls in those obtaining purity of heart is pride – the recognition of one's own purity of heart in relation to the world of men. However, one who continues to keep his gaze locked on God, considers himself to be more sinful.[847] Cassian explains this in his two types of pride found in *Institutes* book twelve. Spiritual pride only affects those who have obtained a high level of purity of heart. However, those who have obtained a high level, and keep their gaze locked on God, give "themselves no credit for the great circumspection of heart that they had in comparison with others, which indeed they attributed not to their own effort but to divine grace." These perfect men knew that they "could not attain to the purity of heart that they desired as long as the burden of flesh offered resistance".[848] These men have achieved a level of purity of heart so great in "comparison with others", yet they knew that they were not able to reach the purity of heart "that they desired". These are the most important pieces of Cassian's understanding of purity of heart. One who has attained it, keeping his gaze locked on God, considers himself to be more sinful and recognizes only God's grace in his progression. However, from those looking from the outside onto this one are able to recognize the great level which he has already attained. This is why Cassian is able to speak of one having purity of heart while also postponing it for the next life. For those looking for an example, purity of heart can be recognized, learned from, and imitated. However, for the personal individual experience of the ascetic, constantly working to bring himself, body and soul, back to God, he will never achieve the purity of heart which he desires.

[846] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 10.6.1: "...to the extent that it withdraws from the contemplation of earthly and material things, its state of purity lets it progress and causes Jesus to be seen by the soul's inward gaze..."
[847] Cf. Cassian, *Inst*. 12.15.1
[848] Cassian, *Inst.* 12.15.2; cf. *Conf.* 23.8.1

Therefore, Casiday is correct in indicating Cassian's connection of purity of heart to chastity as a break from Evagrian *apatheia* with the integration of Augustinian teachings. He is also correct in saying that "what he has done is distil Evagrius' *apatheia*. By filtering off aspects that could be misleading, Cassian has thereby clarified it. Augustine lacked whatever personal motivation Cassian might have had for undertaking the task."[849] However, what Cassian has done with his understanding of purity of heart is so much more than that. He has purified Evagrian *apatheia* of its controversial aspects by emphasizing the impossibility of sinlessness. His personal motivations were not only to bring his Evagrian education to the West, but also to bring it in his own way. His purity of heart fits into his specific theology. His anthropological eschatology includes the necessity of both body and soul in the ascetical purification process. He also is able to explain how one is able to cultivate purity of heart without the dangers of pride and the dangerous thinking that sinfulness is possible. Rather, purity of heart is found in the reclamation of the original relationship between the created human being—in body and soul—and the Creator. This relationship was lost when the human turned his gaze from God. Now he must return his gaze and persevere in it for salvation.

IV.5: Love and Contemplation

In *Institutes* book four, Cassian explains that purity of heart leads to apostolic love.[850] Although he does not expand on love here, in Conference Fourteen, he explains that "humility of heart, which will, by the perfection of love, bring you not to the knowledge which puffs up but to that which enlightens."[851] Purity of heart is connected to the vision of God – that vision and connection to Him is through love, because "God is love".[852] Therefore, the cultivation of love and spiritual knowledge in this life is the expansion of the

[849] Casiday, "*Apatheia* and sexuality", p.392
[850] Also, cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 1.6.3, 1.7.2, 20.12.4, 21.17.1
[851] Cassian, *Conf.* 14.10.1
[852] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 16.13; Evagrius, *Letter* 56.3

image of God.[853] For Evagrius, *apatheia* also leads to the cultivation of love which leads to spiritual knowledge.[854] Both monks also connect love to the necessity of renunciation. Evagrius explains in *To Eulogios* that "the ascesis of renunciation" allows the monk to "make for himself a wall of faith, a fortification of hope, and secure grounding in love".[855] Through the connection to renunciation, both monks also stress the importance of combining practical works with spiritual cultivation.[856] Cassian explicitly refers to the necessity of the second renunciation (that of the vices) in cultivating love, but he also the third renunciation, which is the renunciation of the present and visible to contemplate only the invisible.[857] This cannot occur without that "love of God which never fails".[858] Because God *is* love, it is constant, it is the only thing which remains after salvation.[859] This is Cassian's emphasis on love. It is *the* virtue that is the human being's link to and through salvation. It is the way to the invisible realities through knowledge, prayer, and contemplation. This is why in book four of the *Institutes,* he ends his explanation of the stages of the ascetic life with love—whereas, Evagrius continues to state natural knowledge, theology, and ultimate blessedness.[860] Evagrius' focus is more on explaining contemplation, in which a monk is able to understand the relationship between the Father, Son and Spirit. His need to explain this, especially the role and nature of the Holy Spirit, is affected by the status of the theological conversation of his time.

Thomas Humphries suggests that one of the major differences between Cassian and Evagrius is that Cassian is writing in a time in which the full divinity of the Holy Spirit is no

[853] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 14.10.1:" For it is impossible for the impure mind to receive the gift of spiritual knowledge."
[854] Cf. Evagrius, *KG* 5.66: "The *nous* is not united to knowledge until it has united the passible part of its soul to its proper virtues." Also cf. *To Eulogios* 21.23; *Praktikos prol* 8, 81, 91; *To Monks* 67; *On Prayer* 52; *Excerpts* 41
[855] Evagrius, *To Eulogios* 12.11
[856] Cf. Cassian, *Inst.* 5.24, 5.35; *Conf.* 1.7.3, 1.10.3, 21.15.1, 21.17.1; and Evagrius, *To Eulogios* 24.25, 30.32; *Praktikos* 91; *On Luke* 1
[857] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 3.6.1
[858] Cassian, *Conf.* 3.7.8
[859] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 1.11.1, 15.2.3
[860] Cf. Evagrius, *Praktikos prol.* 8

longer being questioned, therefore, he is able completely to assume it and does not need to defend its place. Rather, he is able to interweave the Holy Spirit throughout his ascetical theology. However, Cassian also interweaves his Christology throughout his ascetical theology and only feels the need to defend it when he is explicitly asked to by Leo. While it is difficult to pin down if Evagrius' more turbulent theological atmosphere concerning the relationship between the Father, Son and Spirit has a definite effect on his need to explain parts of the knowledge found in contemplation, it is important to at least take note of it.

His understanding of contemplation is entrenched in his understanding of creation, cosmology, and eschatology. Evagrius divides contemplation into two stages: the second natural contemplation, which is the contemplation of the second material creation through Christ, and the first natural contemplation, which is the contemplation of the Trinity and the first immaterial creation through God. This division does not fit into Cassian's theology because he does not have the same understanding of creation as Evagrius. For him, contemplation is the journey for knowledge of all divine things – both created and uncreated.

Cassian divides knowledge, or *theoretike*, into historical interpretation and spiritual understanding, which is then divided into tropology, allegory, and anagogy. He explains that all four work together in such a way that one scriptural passage can be understood in four different ways. For example, Jersusalem is the city of the Jews according to the historical interpretation. "According to allegory it is the Church of Christ. According to anagogy it is that heavenly city of God 'which is the mother of us all.' According to tropology it is the soul of the human being..."[861] Cassian continues to relate allegory to revelation, because it illuminates concealed spiritual understandings within the historical narrative; tropology to knowledge because it allows the monk to develop his discernment in the vices and virtues;

[861] Cassian, *Conf.* 14.8.4; cf. Didymus the Blind, *Comm. In Zech.* 1.110, and Humphires, *Ascetic Pneumatology*, p.19

and anagogy to prophecy because it reveals the "invisible and what lies in the future".[862] The knowledge found in the contemplation of Scripture is revealed through the practice of both the practical and contemplative aspects of the ascetic life. The historical and tropological pertain especially to the practical, while the allegorical and anagogical foster the contemplative.

Evagrius speaks of two kinds of interpretation – practical and spiritual. He then relates them to the three stages of the ascetic life: practical, physical, and theological. Either kind of interpretation can pertain to each of the three aspects of the ascetic life.[863] Cassian has clearly moved beyond the Evagrian understanding of interpreting scriptural knowledge. It is the rumination on and contemplation of Scripture that allows the monk to progress in his contemplative connection to God. Yet it is not a structured, definitive knowledge that he is seeking, as is implied in the specifically progressive Evagrian contemplation. Rather, Cassian focuses more on the connection and simplistic freedom found in contemplation through the connection to God through love. Both Cassian and Evagrius agree that it is through contemplation that one understands the definition of humanity, and therefore the pathway to salvation, as well as the relationship between created and Creator. As has already been established, these aspects of theology are different in Cassian than in Evagrius, making even the knowledge found in the contemplative journey different for each monk.

Therefore, while the connection between love and knowledge/contemplation is quite similar between the two monks, Cassian's focus and emphasis on love itself in the ascetic life is much greater. Love is the breastplate donned by the monk in the spiritual battle – it provides protection to him through its purely divine nature.[864] The three main virtues "that restrain people from vice" are faith, hope, and love. Evagrius also mentions the power of

[862] Cassian, *Conf.* 14.8.5-6
[863] Cf. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.93
[864] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 7.5.6, 20.8.1; Evagrius lightly touches upon the protective nature of love in *To Eulogios* 13.12: "the person who loves stillness guards the senses and makes war on the thoughts." Here is clear that love has a connective to power not only to God but to certain virtues as well.

these three: "he who holds from the Holy Trinity these three, namely, faith, hope, and love, shall be a triple-walled city fortified by the towers of virtue."[865] However, Cassian does not merely equate the three virtues. Rather, he explains that while faith and hope are important, both of them "belong properly to those who are tending toward perfection and have not yet acquired a love of virtue". It is love, however, that signals a higher level, for love "belongs particularly to God and to those who have received in themselves the image and likeness of God."[866]

Through the development of purity of heart, one eradicates the vices and cultivates the virtues, but if one is still fearing the vices, or fearing God's punishment, he has not yet reached the perfection of love.[867] Love is simply God. God loves men "for no other reason than our salvation", and it is through the ascetic life that man learns to love God "for no other reason than sheer love of Him."[868] This distinction follows along the lines seen in purity of heart. True purity of heart leads to love which is *the* line of connection to God. Purity of heart functions through the uninterrupted vision of God, just as love functions through the uninterrupted communion with Him. The renunciation of the visible and earthly realities is also a renunciation of fear of the vices or hope of future rewards – it is simply God's love. All other virtues—which are related to this fear and hope—will be "abolished and destroyed, but love will remain forever".[869] The relationship between purity of heart, love, and contemplation in Cassian's asceticism has "the effect of maintaining the moral dimension of

[865] Evagrius, *To Eulogios* 11.10; There are quite a few similarities between love in *To Eulogios* and Cassian's understanding of love. In this text, Evagrius connects love to *apatheia*, emphasizes the importance of its combination with physical ascetic acts, its role in the eradication of vices and cultivation of virtue, its protective nature, the importance of brotherly love, and the distinction between worldly and divine love. Although there are also similarities in many other texts, none have so many together. Cassian's focus and emphasis on each of these aspects of love often tend to be slightly different (he places much more emphasis on brotherly love, for example), but it is important to consider in his relationship to the Evagrian textual corpus.
[866] Cassian, *Conf.* 11.6.3
[867] For Cassian, love is the source of all virtues (*Conf.* 3.8.1), but Evagrius does not give it the same pride of place. He relates it to the vices of the soul (*Praktikos* 35); calls it a virtue of the concupiscible part of the soul (*Praktikos* 89); and also places it within the irascible part of the soul (*KG* 1.84, 3.35).
[868] Cassian, *Conf.* 11.7.6
[869] Cassian, *Conf.* 15.2.3

contemplation. Rather than being an affair of the intellect alone, as with the philosophers and even with Evagrius, Cassian makes it depend more on the heart."[870]

IV.5: Prayer

Prayer is the inner, spiritual expression of the entirety of the ascetic journey. It is the active communing with God through every level of the ascetic life. It functions in the practical life, in the regulation of psalmody and prayer times as well as in the community experience of prayer in the psalmody itself. These regulations concerning prayer bring the monk – whether cenobitic or anchoritic – into the spiritual community that makes up the body of Christ.[871] It also functions in the contemplative life in the battle between flesh and spirit, the battle with the demons, and the progression in purity of heart, love, and contemplation. While Cassian's description of prayer overall is quite similar to Evagrius', it differs in important ways. Prayer is a gift from God, it is the communing with Him. For Evagrius, it can be directed toward Christ in the earlier stages of the ascetic life and contemplation, but once one has moved beyond the second natural contemplation, he then directs prayer to the Logos and eventually to the Father, himself.

Apatheia cleanses the concupiscible and irascible parts of the soul in order to allow the *nous* to find the connection to God. The *nous* is the place of God, and here is where the "formless state of prayer"[872] is "bestowed on the intellect. The knowledge catches up the intellect into the height and separates it from all that is apprehended by the senses. The intellect becomes 'one that sees the Holy Trinity' (*KG* 4.30), because the Trinity let itself be seen in its blessed 'light'."[873] Gabriel Bunge has here hit upon the central idea in Evagrius'

[870] Kardong, "John Cassian's evaluation of monastic practices", p.94 n.23; Kardong references this idea from his own notes from a class taught by Adalbert de Vogüé; also, cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 1.6, 5.33-34
[871] Cf. Catherine Chin, "Cassian, Cognition and the Common Life", p.153
[872] Evagrius, *Skemmata* 22
[873] Gabriel Bunge, "The 'spiritual prayer': on the Trinitarian mysticism of Evagrius of Pontus", Fr. Brian McNeil (trans.), *Monastic Studies* 17, 1986, p.202

understanding of prayer. It is the *nous* that receives God's grace in formless prayer, it is the *nous* that is separated from the rest of the senses and sees the Holy Trinity. This is because the *nous* is the part of the human being that was created in the image and likeness of God in the first immaterial creation. Everything that came about after the Movement will pass away—everything except the *nous*, which alone will regain the image.

Evagrius also stresses the necessity for imageless prayer. This is the very imageless prayer that Abba Serapion complains about in Conference Ten when he states that he feels that his God has been taken from him. This is Cassian's only reference to the the anthropomorphite controversy of this time – as was seen in the Introduction. For Evagrius, it is clear that he considers images to be part of the material world – for the image of God itself has been lost to fallen rational beings and must be regained through the complete renunciation of the material world. Cassian also considers imagelessness to be an essential function of prayer, but he confirms the image of God in men (albeit a corrupted one). As has been shown by Golitzin and Patterson, the anthropomorphic argument was less about the interpretation of Genesis 1:26-7 as ascribing a body to God, and more about the desire for an vision of the Incarnate Christ.[874]

Cassian's position on the image in men is actually not that far from the anthropomorphite position. Therefore, it is probable that he portrays them as simplistic and ignorant in order to distance himself from this similar view concerning the image of God in men. This is necessary because he denies the image of Christ in prayer along with Evagrius. Evagrius was certainly in opposition to the anthropormorphic view, and they considered themselves to be "defenders of the reality of the Incarnation and the Evagrians deniers of

[874] cf. Alexander Golitzin, "'Demons suggest an illusion of God's glory in a form': controversy over the divine body and vision of glory in some late fourth, early fifth century century monastic literature" and "The form of God and the vision of the Glory: some thoughts on the Anthropomorphite controversy of 399"; Paul Patterson, *Visions of Christ*

it".[875] Cassian faults the anthropomorphites for seeking an image of Christ Incarnate in prayer, and not moving beyond this image to pure prayer. Therefore, while Cassian has a different understanding of the foundation for imageless prayer than Evagrius, he still adamantly defends it as it fits into his own theology.

As stated above, Evagrius places the centre of the connection to the divine in the *nous* because it was originally created in the image. Cassian, on the other hand, focuses on the heart as the centre for the connection to the divine; however, contemplation and prayer seem to fall within the realm of the mind rather than the heart. Cassian does not distinguish the mind from the rest of the human being in the way that Evagrius does because, for Cassian, men were created as body and soul, with no separation in creation, fall, or salvation. Purity of heart and the cultivation of love work with the contemplation and prayer of the mind in order to bring the whole human being to salvation. Just as chastity and purity of heart work together in the purification of the outer and inner man, prayer is the expression of one's status of purification.

For Cassian, there are four kinds of prayer which pertain to the status of the inner man in his ascetic journey. In Conference Nine, he explains that these four kinds of prayer: supplication, prayer, intercession, and thanksgiving, which are based on 1 Tim 2:1.[876] "Cassian, like Origen, did not view the four varieties as simple alternatives."[877] Evagrius gives definitions for the first three—supplication, prayer, and intercession—but not provide an extended theology of prayer based on them. Cassian does, however, elaborate much more on the four kinds of prayer, with the fourth being the most important, especially in his divergence from Evagrius.[878] Supplication is "an imploring or a petition concerning sins".[879]

[875] Pattterson, *Visions of Christ*, p.47.
[876] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 9.9.1; Cassian bases this on 1 Tim 2:1: "I urge first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made."
[877] Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.107; cf. Origen, *De oratione* 14.2
[878] The heaviness of Cassian's dependence on Evagrius here is under contention. Marsili advocates for Evagrian influence (over Origenian, especially) based on Cassian's use of εὐχὴ, cf. Marsili, *Giovanni Cassiano*, p.98-100

It is more generally the prayer of beginners on the ascetic journey who are still focused on the stings of the vices.[880] A prayer is where the monk offers or promises something to God, which Cassian explains is called εὐχὴ in Greek.[881] This definition is also found in Evagrius: "A vow (εὐχὴ) is a voluntary promise of good things."[882] An intercession is the prayer on behalf of someone else.[883] Prayers of thanksgiving are those made in recognition of the grace and power of God. Cassian explains that these are made "when our spirit gazes with the most pure eyes upon the rewards of the holy ones that are stored up for the future and is moved to pour out wordless thanks to God with boundless joy."[884] It is this fourth kind of prayer that sets him apart from Evagrius.

The prayers of thanksgiving are characterised by the fiery, fervent prayers that Columba Stewart notes show Cassian's connection to the *Apophthegmata* as well as a possible connection to Pseudo-Macarius.[885] These are the prayers that the more advanced ascetic experiences and therefore the ones that the monk strives for. They are the complete abandonment of recognition of self for the consideration "with a most pure mind [of] the kindnesses and mercies of the Lord that he has bestowed in the past, gives in the present, and prepares for the future, and are rapt by their fervent heart to that fiery prayer which can be

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n.2. Casiday referencing Marsili's thoughts, but gives neither extra support nor criticism; cf. Casiday, *Saint John Cassian on Prayer*, p.56 n.28. However, Stewart considers that while there is a small Evagrian influence in the definitions of the first three types of prayer, "Cassian's commentary on εὐχὴ is much more extensive than Evagrius', and Evagrius says nothing at all about εὐχαριστία, which for Cassian was the most important of the four." (Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, p.205 n.100)

[879] Cassian, *Conf.* 9.11.1; Marsili (cf. *Giovanni Cassiano*, p.98) connects this to *Skemmata* 28, in which Evagrius also gives a definition for a petition, which is accompanied by a supplication, and both connect it to the asking for assistance. However, Evagrius defines it as a request for good things, rather than Cassian's focus on it as a request concerning sins: "Petition is a converse of the mind with God accompanied by supplication: it comprises assistance or request for good things."

[880] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 9.15.1

[881] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 9.12.1-2; Cassian supports this with the scriptural passage, Eccl 5:4. Evagrius does not use make reference to this passage, nor does he connect it to a definition of prayer in his work, *On Ecclesiastes*.

[882] Evagrius, *Skemmata* 29; also cf. *Definitions* 8, 9; For the connection between Cassian and Evagrius found here, cf. Weber, *Die Stellung des Johannes Cassianus*, p.51-52, and Marsili, *Giovanni Cassiano*, p.98

[883] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 9.13; also cf. Evagrius, *Skemmata* 30: "Intercession is an entreaty brought to God by a superior being concerning the salvation of others."

[884] Cassian, *Conf.* 9.14

[885] Cf. Stewart, *Cassian the Monk*, pp.114-130

neither seized nor expressed by the mouth of man."[886] While they are more often experienced by the one advanced in virtue, they are not out of reach to one still in the earlier stages of the journey. Rather, it is a state of prayer in which the abandonment of self is important – and not impossible for a novice because it is not dependant on the man, but is a gift from God.[887]

IV.6: Conclusion

Cassian is clearly influenced by the Evagrian structures of asceticism in his emphasis and descriptions of purity of heart, love, contemplation, and prayer; however, because the theological foundations of his own asceticism are vastly different from Evagrius', his understanding of the contemplative life shifts. The theological context of his time is such that there is no need to question the relationship between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, yet the relationship between human and divine has become more important. This has clearly affected his Christology since his understanding of Christ as fully human, fully divine, and fully part of the Trinity is distinct from Evagrius. Evagrius' subordination of the person of Christ because of the union between created and uncreated is in concert with his overall tendency to divide aspects of the ascetic life in terms of the first and second creation.

For Evagrius, it is the *nous* that is the central focus for the monk. The *nous* is the connection within Christ between his divine and human self, showing that it is through the *nous* that the rational being regains its original relationship to the Unity—which requires the complete abandonment of the entire material world, including the concupiscible and irascible parts of the soul as well as the body. The practical life allows one to begin to move past the body, and *apatheia*, or the eradication of the vices, is the pathway to moving beyond the parts of the soul that came about after the Movement. Then the *nous* must increase its amount of knowledge (lost in the Movement) through the contemplation of the material world and then

[886] Cassian, *Conf.* 9.15.1
[887] Cf. Cassian, *Conf.* 9.16-17

the contemplation of the immaterial. This focus on a structured knowledge implies that there is a definite, intellectual set of things to learn awaiting the *nous* in the Unity.

Cassian, on the other hand, the heart is the centre of connection between the human and divine. This is affected by his definition of humanity as a being created as body-soul which requires a greater focus than the intellect. Purity of heart for him is not just about the purification of part of the soul, as is Evagrius' *apatheia,* but rather is the purification of the entire spiritual human being in harmony with the purification of the body through ascetical practice and cultivation of chastity. Purity of heart is a gradual process that relies on the subjection of the human will to the divine will. Cassian focuses on the cultivation of an emotional, psychological connection to God through the cultivation of a state of tranquillity and love, off which knowledge is a by-product. Contemplation is not described as a the process of revealing a defined set of knowledge, but rather as the continual cultivation of the connection to God through the different possibilities of interpretation found within Scripture. The four kinds of interpretation which all can be applied even to a single passage, allows for a simplistic freedom of expression of the love of God. Asceticism is about the renunciation of self, but where Evagrian asceticism is the renunciation of self in the narrowing focus on the *nous* and the original immaterial creation, Cassian's asceticism is the renunciation of self allowing for the production of "more in a very brief moment" than the human being could ever articulate.[888]

[888] Cassian, *Conf.* 9.15

Conclusion

During the course of this thesis, we have examined the practical life, the vices, the spiritual battle, and the contemplative life in the endeavour to clarify the relationship between Cassian and his predecessor, Evagrius. Often, the simplicity of naming Evagrius as Cassian's biggest influence overshadows the fullness of Cassian's asceticism. Therefore, it has been necessary to delve into each aspect of the ascetic life in order to provide a clearer understanding of this relationship. This thesis has also endeavoured to build on the changing scholarly conversation concerning this relationship which has been illuminating influences beyond Evagrius. Combined with this, by providing my own insight to the conversation, it is important that we qualify how we refer to the Evagrian influence in Cassian's works. Cassian was a student of Evagrius, but he was also a student of Augustine, Basil, Jerome, John Chrysostom, and Origen to name a few.

Cassian speaks of his own experiences within the Egyptian desert even if he was clearly part of the same community as Evagrius. This is clear in the practical life where Cassian is able to use Evagrian ideals to fit within his own context and audience. He is able deftly to morph Evagrian frames to fit his own theological content. His spiritual meanings for the monastic dress, description of psalmody, the entrance into the cenobium, the abba-monk relationship, and even his description of the three renunciations show that he is his own monk, theologian, and ascetic teacher apart from the influences of one of his own teachers. The practical and contemplative lives neither are separate entities nor are they successive principles. They must work in constant harmony with each other in order to foster the connection to God through love. The subjection of the human will to the divine will cannot reach its completion without the subjection of the monk's will to the Abba's will and

judgment. The monk will not be able to progress to the difficult and sometimes demoralizing struggles with the demons if he is not able to sit outside the cenobium for ten days being ignored or insulted. He will not be able to reach the fiery, fervent prayers of thanksgiving without the practice of psalmody within the community of brothers. He will not be able to renounce his worldly identity for his salvific identity without the complete renunciation of individuality in taking up the monastic habit.

The practical and contemplative lives function in harmony within Evagrian asceticism as well, but the experience of that asceticism is fundamentally altered by Cassian's own developments. Even though he uses the list of eight vices that Evagrius first presents, he creates a more structured and definitive list which takes a more central role in his asceticism. This more central role is based on the internalization of vice and the movement towards categorization of personal sins that are rooted within the inner man. He places more emphasis on the inner battle between the flesh and the spirit than the external battle with the demons, yet provides a more detailed account of the demonic personalities, organization, and diversity.

This internalization of vice is based on his understanding of Creation, which is vastly different from Evagrius' and provides an incompatible definition of humanity. This changed definition of humanity—as well as angels and demons—alters the entire ascetic program. Its greatest impact lies in the contemplative life where purity of heart, love, contemplation, and prayer—all inspired in some way by Evagrius—now must have different definitions in line with a different eschatological pathway. This is fostered by Cassian's own Christology which creates a different relationship between created and Creator. This relationship, for Cassian, is based in the heart and is a more emotive, psychological connection through love than Evagrius' intellectual, philosophical connection through knowledge. While Evagrius is also able to speak of this connection through love in his use of purity of heart, his emphasis on

apatheia and the philosophical language he uses create an intellectual eschatology. He places the connection to God in the *nous*, because it was the original, immaterial creation through the Father, and the material world, along with the body, the concupiscible, and the irascible parts of the soul, were created in a second creation by Christ after the original Movement.

Therefore, the eschatological road is paved by all of these aspects. Cassian's understanding of gluttony as *the* definitive vice of humanity, and fornication as only definitive of humanity's current *state* reveals his emphasis on the necessity of a body-soul purification and eventual transformation in salvation. Gluttony was able to tempt even the body in its original creation, but this presence of the body and soul in the Fall, coupled with the influence of the Devil, is the foundation for humanity's ability for salvation. For Evagrius, the body is good in that it is the vehicle for the salvation of the *nous*, but in the end, it will pass away with the rest of the material world. For Cassian, however, the body will be transformed along with the soul. Therefore, the monk must cultivate chastity in harmony with purity of heart in order to increase the love within his heart. Love is his connection to God and it is love that allows him to keep his gaze locked on God. This relationship is also fostered by Cassian's understanding of prayer and especially the fiery, fervent prayers of thanksgiving. These are the ultimate connection to God's grace and love. The complete abandonment of consideration of self and everything connected to the corrupted state of humanity.

Much of this divergence is determined by a fundamental difference in the theological foundations of Cassian's asceticism. His understanding of Creation and Christology vastly changes the definition of humanity and the relationship between created and Creator. This is heavily dictated by the theological, political, and social context of the twenty years between Evagrius' death and Cassian's works. Cassian has first-hand experience of many controversies after receiving his Egyptian education. In the Origenist controversy, there are

issues of the origin of the soul, the relationship of the soul to the body (especially in relation to the Fall), the ultimate fate of the Devil and the demons, and understanding our beginning in order to understand our ultimate end. All of these aspects are controversial in Evagrius' theology since he expanded upon the ideas in Origen. When the anthropomorphite controversy arises, it centers on the definition of the "image and likeness" of God. To Evagrius and Origen, only the *nous* is created in the image and likeness, which was lost in the Fall; however, to their opponents, the soul and the body must have been created together, the image is not necessarily lost, and questions arise concerning the image of the pre-Incarnate as well as Incarnate Christ. Therefore, it is right to image the Incarnate Christ when praying. The "Evagrians" consider the use of images at all in prayer to be prohibited because even the image of the Incarnate Christ is a representation from the material world and the material senses which are to be left behind in the road to *theologia* and salvation. Cassian, however, confirms the image of God in the psychosomatic man through the "inbreathing" of God. It is something breathed into the man through the power and grace of God. By explaining it this way, Cassian is able to affirm place of the image and likeness of God *within* man in the original creation. He portrays the anthropomorphites as simplistic and ignorant in order to distance himself from a similar understanding of the image. However, while he allows for the image of Christ in prayer for a beginner, he asserts that this image must be moved on from which he probably considers the anthropomorphites to not do.

This anthropomorphite conversation then opens questions about the origin of the soul and the body, as well as the origin of sin in human beings. Those that believe that the material body was the result of sin or at least its host, could not fathom that it was created in the image and likeness of the Divine. Therefore, the issues of the Pelagian controversy come to the fore. It is not only about the origin of the soul, but also exactly what punishment Adam passed down to the human race. According to the ideas of Pelagianism, mortality is the

punishment of Adam – not inherent sinfulness. This allows for the individual to have an equal opportunity for both righteousness and sinfulness. When Augustine argues against Pelagianism, one of the issues he focuses on is infant baptism – what is the necessity of infant baptism if sin wasn't transmitted to humanity through Adam? He also considered Pelagianism to limit the tremendous grace of the Incarnation. Cassian, on the other hand, takes a different approach to the Pelagian question by stressing the combination of human effort with the grace of God, but ultimately stressing the vital centrality of God's grace. With the aid of the influence of the Devil, Adam passed down a body and soul prone to weakness, a weakness that must be combated through the ascetic life and the cultivation of love.

Throughout these controversies, the Christological debate continues to evolve slowly. Connected to the Incarnation are issues of salvation and who is worthy of it. One of the issues with Origen's and Evagrius' works is the idea that the Devil and the demons may receive salvation in the end and return to the Divine Unity. Many took issue with this idea and it was soon condemned; however, for Augustine and the Pelagians, another issue arises concerning those within humanity that would receive salvation. For the Pelagians, the idea seemed simple enough – sinners would burn and the righteous would remain blessed; however, opponents of Pelagianism understood this to mean that Christian sinners would burn in the end of all things and not be redeemed. This Pelagian idea seems to be almost the exact opposite of the controversial ideas of Evagrius and Origen – for them, all would be redeemed in the end, and for the Pelagians, all sinners would burn in the end no matter their faith. Augustine works to find a middle ground, but even his ideas are controversial to some – including Cassian.

Although the questions and issues of these controversies go beyond those issues Evagrius himself dealt with, they are rooted in one's understanding of Creation, Cosmology, and Christology – for all of which Evagrius has a clear theology. All of these aspects are vital

to the ascetic life – what man was made of in the beginning, how the Fall occurred and by what actions, what the effects of the Fall are, and therefore how salvation is possible. It is necessary to understand the workings of vice and virtue, good and evil, body and soul in order to strive toward the final goal. This final goal is also founded upon the beginning – the relationship between human and divine and the nature of the divinity itself. Evagrius' emphasis on the first immaterial creation, *nous*, and the second material creation, which includes the humanity and the body, predicates a definition of humanity and a definition of Christ different from Cassian's. This then shifts the foundations of the monastic life completely. Anthropology, the spiritual battle, purity of heart, prayer, and salvation are all founded upon one's understanding of Creation and Christology. Therefore, it is clear that while Cassian uses the Evagrian frame of the ascetic life, his theology fundamentally changes the experience found within creating a new asceticism for a new context.

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